1650

A PATRIOTIC CALL

TO PREPARE IN A SEASON OF

PEACE,

FOR ONE OF

POLITICAL DANGER;

SUGGESTED BY

REFLECTIONS ON THE POLICY AND DESIGNS

OF THE

Government of the United States,

TOWARDS

Great Britain and her American Colonies.

ALSO,

A BRIEF VIEW,

OF SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL ADVANTAGES

POSSESSED BY THE

Province of Nova-Scotia.

WITH

AN INQUIRY

INTO THE CAUSES WHICH HAVE HITHERTO RETARDED ITS PROSPERITY;

AND

OBSERVATIONS

UPON THE MEANS WHICH CAN MOST EFFECTUALLY BE EMPLOYED, FOR ITS ADVANCEMENT TO A WEALTHY AND FLOURISHING CONDITION.

John George Marshall. By
BY A NATIVE OF THE PROVINCE. Anthony Landers

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INTRODUCTION.

THE acknowledged importance of the present period to the general interests of this Colony, and to the hopes and prospects of its future prosperity, will sufficiently justify any honest and well meant examination of the subjects, on which that prosperity must chiefly depend. So much, however, has recently been written and said respecting the means to be employed for improving our situation, that some may be ready to conclude, that it is altogether unnecessary to offer any thing further, either by way of warning, or instruction, but that we should now be left quietly to apply to practice, the information already before us.

MUCH, it is true, has been done to rouse the latent energies of the country, which it is to be hoped will be productive of beneficial and lasting effects; but, it will be found, that there are still several subjects with which our welfare is intimately connected, which none who have been labouring to advance it, have closely or fully examined; and that some of the principal causes which have hitherto operated to retard the advancement of the colony, have not yet been made the subjects of public remark. There are, also, many motives which should powerfully incite us to diligent and laudable exertion, which have not yet been pointed out and explained.

THOSE causes and motives are exhibited without any reserve or disguise in the following pages. In truth, it must be confessed that very little restraint or concealment is therein observed, but all the subjects which are introduced are discussed and examined with a freedom and plainness which it is conceived their high importance not only renders perfectly justifiable but indispensibly required. If it should be conceived, that some of the remarks, particularly those which respect the prevailing habits and manners among us, are harsh or severe, let it be considered by way of check to any feelings of irritation or displeasure,—whether they are just. It is quite as unworthy of him who professes to give to any subject a full and impartial examination, to varnish or conceal any part of the truth which relates to it, as it is of him who desires improvement, to be averse from hearing of his faults, or to seek to disguise them. Although, it is too common a remark, and is too frequently adhered to in practice,—that the truth is not always to be told ; yet it will seldom be found, that important defects in the moral conduct of men, can be concealed with propriety or advantage.

IT is matter of curious observation, with what different feelings, on different occasions, men will hear of their errors, their follies, or vices. They, who will listen with the greatest patience and complacency, to the recital of them in all their aggravations by the preacher or the moralist, when treated of with relation to a future state of existence, or the principles of moral duty, will feel the highest displeasure, or perhaps indignation, at hearing them mentioned, as bearing upon political affairs, or their views and endeavours for the improvement of their temporal circumstances. In the latter case, their worldly wisdom is questioned and arraigned ; of which, they are most tenacious, and too generally most highly esteem. It will, however, be found, that a habit of temporising, and of disguising and palliating errors, and vices, is often no less fatal in politics, and in matters of worldly advantage, than in religion and morals. In all, sincerity, and candor, are highly essential, and should constantly be cherished and observed.

ALTHOUGH, in the following pages, a variety of sub-

jects are treated of, which have a relation to the advancement of our general welfare, it will be found, that the greatest stress is laid upon our Agricultural interest. This, indeed, is held forth as the one, through which alone, we can expect to attain to a state of prosperity and abundance. It is kept in view throughout all that is advanced; from an attentive consideration of the neglect, with which among us, it, unhappily, so long has been treated, these observations first were suggested; and it is from a sincere and zealous desire, to afford even his slender assistance to the exertions of the many enlightened and patriotic individuals who are now labouring to advance this essential source of our prosperity, that the author of them has been prompted to give them publicity. If his humble endeavours shall contribute in the slightest degree, towards accomplishing this most desirable object; if they shall serve in the least to animate and encourage the industrious to still greater exertion, to warn the incautious, and improvident, or to rouse the indolent and desponding to laudable action, he will account himself amply rewarded, and will greatly rejoice.

IT will be sufficiently apparent on perusing the following remarks, that the writer in making them public, has not sought to derive any private gratification, from the expression of popular opinion. The free and undisguised manner in which they are made, would alone forbid any hope of obtaining that kind of reward. If such had been his object, he is sufficiently acquainted with the state of public feeling, and the views and prejudices of different parties and orders of persons among us, to have made his remarks upon the subjects he has treated of, of that nature and character, and to have given to them that tone and bias, in favour of a powerful party, which would have gained to them warm though unmerited applause; and have secured to him the full gratification of any feeling of vanity he might have been inclined to indulge. Such a course, however, his regard for the cause of truth, and sincerity, and for the firm convictions of his mind would not allow him to adopt.

SUCH as they are, they are given to the public, with little

anxiety with regard to commendation or applause; but with a sincere desire for the accomplishment of the desirable objects they are designed to assist in promoting. Of the different receptions, with which according to the different feelings, and views of individuals, they will meet, the author of them is fully aware. They will, very probably, be read by a number, will be condemned and rejected by some, be slighted and disregarded by others, and by a few candid and liberal minds, may be received with indulgence and favour. The approbation of but one of the latter, independent of every other consideration, will enable him to slight all the sneers, the cavils, or the resentments of the ignorant, or prejudiced. He is satisfied, however, that their usefulness, will by no means depend upon the prevailing temper with which they may at first be received. Many are offended with admonition at the time it is given, and with him who bestows it, who, yet, will treasure it up, and quietly apply it for the correction and guidance of their future behaviour.

IT may not be deemed improper to observe, that they have been written under many interruptions, and in the midst of the most active engagements. These circumstances, may serve as an apology for any inaccuracies in style, or defects in the arrangement of parts. They are given in the form in which they first occurred to the writer, and if they are calculated to effect any good, it may as well be accomplished under that, as if they were written in a perfect conformity with all the rules, which the most rigid logician or critic would prescribe.

AS to the observations themselves, it would be as vain and useless, as it is far from being intended, to offer any thing by way of apology for the free and pointed manner in which they are made. The opinions they contain, are too decidedly those of the author, and the subjects on which they are delivered, are of too great importance, to desire or expect any other, than what is to be found in their character for truth and correctness.

WITH respect to the writer, very little, if any thing, is requisite to be offered. A variety of reasons, many of which will be sufficiently obvious, have induced him to refrain from submitting his name. It certainly, however, is not necessary, in order to the remarks effecting any good, that this should be known. Let it suffice to say, by way of restraining the formation of an opinion, that they have been written from unfriendly, or unworthy motives, that he is one, who was born, and has been brought up within the Province, who is held to it by ties of the most indissoluble and powerful description, who is deeply interested in its prosperity, and anxiously desirous to promote it,—and lastly, one who is sincerely attached to the mild and equitable government under which he esteems it his happiness to be placed; and who would be ready on all occasions, to contribute his utmost endeavours to defend and preserve it.

FEBRUARY, 1819.

A PATRIOTIC CALL, &c.

THERE is no wisdom employed about human affairs, equal to that which is exercised, in foreseeing and endeavouring to prevent, any threatened or impending evil. Every man not wholly deaf to the voice of reason, or blinded by his passions, who has experienced any kind of loss or affliction, from pursuing a vicious or improper course of conduct, will hasten to abandon it; but it is the part of a truly wise man, to deliberate upon every important step he is about to take, wherever he can see danger likely to arise, to strive to avert it, and to endeavour on all occasions, so to regulate his conduct as to secure his happiness and safety.

Similar observations may be applied to the conduct of States. A succession of reverses and disasters, owing to impolitic measures, will generally afford admonition and teach wisdom to these, and unless they are wholly corrupted, will lead them to alter or reform their policy. Instances may even be produced, of countries through an alteration of political measures, passing from the very verge of ruin, to the greatest prosperity. It is happy when the change is not adopted to late. Those States however, who are truly enlightened, will strive to foresee and to guard against danger, and will more frequently be employed in adopting and pursuing plans, to advance their prosperity, and ensure their independence and safety, than in healing breaches, or repairing miscarriages.

If the design of social establishments, be the happiness of their members, it is the duty of every individual, to contribute all in his power towards the accomplishment of this object, in the community to which he belongs; but the obligation is more particularly imposed upon those, who occupy stations of trust and authority, and to whose guardianship the welfare of their country is confided. It is incumbent upon these to show by their conduct, that in striving after those situations, they are actuated by other motives, than the desire of gratifying a weak and paltry ambition, or effecting any arbitrary or selfish design. The emulations and competitions which subsist among men of integrity with relation to public affairs, when confined within proper bounds, are it is true generally productive of good and should never be wholly suppressed. By serving as guards upon each others conduct, they tend to prevent or retard the progress of corruption, and to preserve the freedom of the state. It is that miserable temper of mind alone that is deserving of detestation and contempt, which refers every thing to itself, and which will sacrifice the best interests of a country, in order to effect its own pitiful schemes of aggrandizement or profit. The perfection of a character considered with reference te society, consists in making the good of the whole the main and ruling principle, and is sufficiently rare to merit wherever it is found the utmost respect, admiration and applause.

The love of country has ever been esteemed a good and valuable principle. It is generally found associated with the best feelings and affections of the human heart, in the different other relations of life, and is that quality for which the most illustrious characters in all ages and countries have been chiefly distinguished.

Of this feeling, so dignifying to humanity, the most extensive professions have in modern times been made by those who had the slightest claims to the praise of possessing it, and in particular by a people who have shewn by their actions, that they are the least acquainted with its genuine influence. Their numberless usurpations

and aggressions, have sufficiently discovered, that in them the pretended love of country, was nothing else than an insatiable lust of dominion and power, and of enriching and adorning their own nation with the plunder and the spoils of others. They who possess this feeling in its purity, will consider its cultivation as a duty, and in exercising it consistently with the general laws of humanity, will experience one of the highest enjoyments of which their nature is capable. While they will ever be ready to stand forward in defence of the independence of their own country, and to sacrifice every personal consideration to preserve it from foreign or domestic usurpations or encroachments, they will respect this feeling in others, and will abstain from tresspassing on their rights.

Although it might be supposed that this principle would prevail to the greatest extent, among those who were the most highly polished and refined in manners and in arts, and who had experienced all the advantages and enjoyments of a highly civilized state of society, yet such has not always been the case. On the contrary, it may be found upon inquiry, such are the inconsistencies of human nature, that it has been more forcible and prevailing in nations which may be considered as comparatively barbarous and rude.

This will appear upon investigation, to be owing in a great measure to circumstances, which in the progress of a people towards high degrees of refinement in social life, call into operation some of the most powerful dispositions of the human mind.

In the earlier ages of society, the wants of life are but few and are readily supplied, and there is scarcely any room for those distinctions which arise from an extensive possession of the advantages of equipage or fortune, but all superiority is made to depend upon the personal character. In such a state of society, the individual in order to become illustrious or eminent, must possess a superior degree of intrepidity, wisdom, and forti-

tude, a contempt of selfish considerations, and the other qualities of a vigorous and cultivated spirit. He must seek his distinction in the exercise of those talents, which determine the actions and deliberations of men in a collective body; he must find it in the camp, or the councils of his country. The exertion of those superior qualities, in pursuit of this distinction, while it affords a private gratification of the most exquisite nature, cherishes a love of country, and a zeal for the public welfare, often productive of the most happy effects.

In more advanced periods of civil establishments, the nature of commercial pursuits, is in general adverse to this attachment and zeal, and tends to confine all anxiety and solicitude, to the care of the individual interest. On the possession of the wealth and luxuries which these introduce, a distinction is founded, in the eagerness to obtain which, with the enjoyments they bring, nearly all other considerations are overlooked or forgotten. The calculations of private profit and loss, are substituted for a zeal for the public good, and they who are employed behind the counter, or absorbed in the paltry schemes and speculations of barter, come to be ranked with those who bear an important part in the direction of public affairs, and who possess talents which fit them for preserving the freedom of a country, or sustaining its perishing fortunes. Under the prevailing influence of a commercial spirit, individuals of the same country become to each other objects of envy, distrust or aversion, and thus, such are the imperfections of human nature, some of the principal advantages promised by a state of society, are made in the pursuit and enjoyment, to weaken and destroy its bonds.

The feelings of the mind are generally in a great measure influenced and determined, by the nature and habits of the occupation or employment which the individual is engaged in pursuing. In those of an illiberal description, and which have no tendency to excite, and furnish no occasions for exercising the most elevated and magnanimous qualities, these will but seldom be found

to predominate. Hence, therfore, it is not to be expected that they who are solely intent upon the acquisition of gain, and the habits of whose calling almost preclude an attention to any other object, should feel any great expansion of mind towards the society at large, or be very solicitous for promoting its welfare.

If men, however, are not to be induced to cherish a love of country, and a regard for the good of their fellow citizens, from considerations of duty, it may be shewn that they ought frequently to do so, if they would wish to be consistent in their views toself interest. They who live under wise and happy systems of government, and whose rights and liberties are properly secured to them, are doubtless interested in the preservation of those advantages, and in order to secure a continuance of them, may with great prudence and propriety, even make some sacrifices of temporary convenience or profit.

Of all people who may be said to have had those inducements, to nourish that attachment and regard, surely none ever possessed them more extensively, than they do, who may boast of being the subjects of Great-Britain, and who enjoy the blessings of her happy constitution. Under that constitution, not only the natural and political rights of individuals are effectually guarded and secured, but what is of more importance to its preservation, even piety and moral virtue are made objects of state — Its superior excellence enabled that magnanimous country, during the long and sanguinary struggle in which she was recently engaged, to maintain her own political freedom, and powerfully to contribute to restore that of a great portion of the civilized world.

To most of her Colonies, has she imparted her free and happy laws and institutions, and in none are they more extensively enjoyed, than in the highly favoured one we inhabit. No only so, but this colony has ever received a distinguished portion of her fostering care and protection. While our fellow subjects of the United

Kingdom, were enduring the heaviest taxes and burthens in support of a struggle for their very existence as a free and independent people, this Province was not called upon to make any sacrifice or contribution whatever for their assistance. The officers of government here, were still paid and supported as they had ever before been, our coast and commerce were carefully guarded, and the extensive establishments kept up for our protection, instead of being at all burdensome, greatly contributed to our wealth and prosperity. To all our representations and requests, the most ready has ever been paid, and regulations have been from time to time established, and restrictions removed, for the purpose of yielding us advantages in commercial and other respects. Here, a freedom and toleration in religious matters, the free and unrestrained pursuit of different occupations and employments, and many other privileges are enjoyed, which are unknown even to our fellow subjects in the parent state.

A consideration of these advantages, should certainly operate to strengthen one attachment to the government under which they are enjoyed, and should stimulate our exertions to preserve and improve them.

These exertions, a very slight reflection will show us, are at present particularly requisite. It has long been the favorite design of the government of the United States, to obtain possession of the British Colonies in North America. This was sufficiently disclosed in the course of the late war with that country, if any doubts before remained on the subject. At the very commencement of that war, it was openly avowed, and the immediate and continued exertions of that government, were employed to effect it. Although foiled in the attempts then made, its design continues the same, and many of its recent commercial regulations, are evidently intended so to weaken these Colonies and retard their prosperity, that on some future favorable occasion, they may become a more easy prey.

In this pursuit, it appears to be urged forward, not

more by a disposition to extend the bounds of its territory, which has recently led it to commit several flagrant aggressions and encroachments, than by a sense of the advantages their possession would bring, combined with a hostile spirit towards Great Britain. This hostility may be attributed to a variety of causes. It appears highly probable, that a remaining sense of the injuries and provocations committed and received during the revolutionary war, is one, but the most obvious and forcible, are a jealousy of the naval power and superiority of Great-Britain, an envy of her extensive commerce, of her glory, wealth, and greatness, and a desire to aggrandize and exalt itself by weakening and reducing these.

It is with nations as with individuals, a similarity of views and pursuits generally produces emulations, jealousies, and strife. This was never more fully exemplified than in the case of the two countries.

Great-Britain has for a length of time past been the first naval power in the world. From her insular situation she has been led since a very early period of her history, to seek a superiority on the ocean, and to the possession of it, has frequently been indebted for preservation from threatened invasion, and for a continuance of the freedom, and many other blessings she enjoys.—By the most daring enterprise, and unparalleled bravery and devotedness, this ascendency has in modern times been completely attained, and although she has been charged with arrogance in its exercise, it may very fairly be doubted, if it would be used by any other power with equal magnanimity and regard to justice. Through this superiority was she enabled in the midst of war, to prosecute her commerce to the remotest regions of the globe, and to make it even then the most flourishing and successful; and what ought at once to silence all reproaches, through this was she enabled to convey her invincible troops to assist in the overthrow of tyranny and usurpation, and in restoring the rights and independence of oppressed and subjugated nations.

Through a spirit of enterprise and industry, Great-Britain has also risen to the greatest eminence in commercial pursuits. Out of these a powerful and well-regulated system has there grown up, possessing the first influence and consideration in the State. Their extensive prosecution has realized however, what is not to be desired in the history of a country; while the nation was daily plunging deeper in debt, individuals were rolling in luxury, and could dazzle and astonish with their wealth and magnificence.

Descended from the same stock, though not possessing equal inducements from situation, the people of the United States, and particularly those of the Northern part of the Union, are labouring to establish their wealth and greatness on the same foundations. Aware of the reciprocal assistance and support which Commerce and a Navy afford, they have of late been very attentive to both, but particularly to the extension of the latter, the late war having sufficiently discovered to them, that in the event of any future contest with Great-Britain, without a formidable Navy to protect their Commerce, the same fate must befal it which it then experienced. Hence they have been stimulated to the very great exertions they have recently made for the increase of the former. Their late commercial regulations and restrictions are pointed to this object, by being intended to retard the prosperity of these colonies, so that they may hereafter acquire their possession, and thereby weaken the naval power of Great-Britain, and secure more extensive means and resources for the increase and establishment of their own.

It is easy indeed to foresee the injuries which would result to Great-Britain from their loss, and the advantages the United States would derive from securing their possession.

From the fisheries on the coasts and shores of some of them, the British possessions in the West Indies are

chiefly supplied with an article of extensive and almost indispensable use there, and also with lumber of various descriptions, together with a variety of other articles the most essential to their prosperity. Deprived of these sources of supply, and Great-Britain being unable from any other quarter of her own, to furnish to a sufficient extent, the commodities they require, which were furnished from hence, the most distressing and mischievous effects would there be quickly experienced. A resort elsewhere would of necessity be required, to procure that supply which would then become precarious and uncertain; and thus, one of the principal sources of the wealth and power of the British Empire would be greatly reduced, even if those possessions could with difficulty be retained. The loss of these Colonies would also be severely felt, as respects the trade and intercourse which is carried on between them and the different parts of the Empire itself. They afford an extensive market for a great variety of manufactures, the produce of its industry, for those commodities which are drawn from its other possessions, and for many which are the returns of its foreign commercial intercourse. This to a country depending so greatly upon Commerce and Manufactures, and whose population is so extensive and a great portion of it with difficulty supported, is of the most vital importance.

From these Colonies also Great Britain is supplied with a number of articles of their growth and produce, particularly with timber, in the conveyance of which such a very great number of British Vessels are annually employed. The interest of the owners of these, who form so numerous and important a class of persons, would be deeply affected, and many of them indeed would be totally ruined, by the loss of the extensive carriage they now possess between these Colonies and the different parts of the Empire, and between them and other places. As Newfoundland is in a great measure dependent upon

these otherColonies, for many articles of the first necessity there, if cut off from the intercourse with them, that possession which affords such an extensive source of trade, would quickly go to decay. Even if it could be retained, it would scarcely yield an adequate return for the difficulty and expence of the support it then would require. Such are some of the most important injuries which would result to Great-Britain from the loss of these Colonies, and it would be easy to enumerate many others, which would operate to reduce her naval power, and deeply to wound her in many other respects.

In greater proportion even than these would be felt by Great-Britain, would be the advantages the United States would derive from their possession. On no part of the coasts of that country are there such extensive and excellent fishing grounds, as line great part of the shores of these Colonies and the coast of Labrador. It is chiefly on account of these that the United States are so intent upon obtaining these Colonies. Secure in their possession, they would be enabled to carry on more conveniently, and to a very great extent, those fisheries which they now prosecute by an invasion of right, and consequently upon a more limited scale, from some apprehension of consequences, as well as under several other disadvantages. That excellent nursery for their seamen would be increased, and all the other sources of their naval power, greatly enlarged and improved. Even if no part of the British possessions in the West-Indies should in consequence fall into their hands, they would secure to themselves the greatest advantages, by the supply of many articles the growth and produce of their present territory, and of these Colonies, which Great-Britain would almost of necessity be obliged to resort to them to obtain ; and by that open intercourse between them and those possessions, which they would not fail to require, and which then could scarcely be denied them. Their trade indeed in every direction would be greatly increased, and they would have it in their

power to establish a preference and superiority in foreign markets over the British, in the sale of the important article of fish, by the immense quantities which they would be enabled to export. Not only so, but what would be still more galling and injurious, they would very probably do the same in the sale of those very commodities which are the produce of our West-India possessions, and which doubtless they would then have it in their power to obtain from thence to a very great extent.

There are also many natural advantages which these colonies possess independent of the fisheries, which are objects of desire to the Americans, in particular the extensive mines of coal, and the great quantities of Plaister of Paris which are contained within some of them. The latter article indeed is of almost indispensible use in the cultivation of the soil in many parts of their territory; where with that as a manure it is rendered astonishingly productive, while in some places without its invigorating aid, the ground would scarcely yield sufficiently, to make it worth the tillage. It has indeed been declared by farmers in some parts of the State of New-York, that it is of such great importance in the cultivation of their lands, that they could even afford to go to the extent of twenty pounds per ton in its purchase, in the ports of that State.

The export of this article, which under wise and prudent regulations, strictly enforced and persisted in, would have been a source of wealth and prosperity to this Province, through impolitic regulations at one time, and a laxity and want of firmness in the enforcement of others, together with a lamentable defect of public virtue at all times, in our own people who were employed in conveying and disposing of it to the Americans, has only tended to empoverish and otherwise injure us. It has been asserted by several, who are well acquainted

with the trade in this article which has been carried on to the American boundaries, and who have long been engaged in its prosecution, that the price obtained for it there, has very frequently been one which has fallen far short of replacing its first cost, and the expense of its carriage ; and that to many upon an average, for several seasons together, it has been such, as scarcely to afford them even a precarious subsistence. When the places to which it has been carried, on, and the manner of its prosecution are considered nothing better could resonably be expected to ensue. Many of those who were employed in conveying it to the boundaries, were persons who were not in circumstances to enable them to wait, till they could obtain a good price for it, in case it happened to be very low at the time of their arrival, or to deposit it there for that purpose and return ; but were under the necessity of disposing of it immediately to American agents, for whatever price they were willing to allow them, having frequently to pay seamen's wages and other expences of its carriage immediately out of the returns of the sale, and having obtained it on credit, to pay the owner of the quarry the first cost of it on their return.

It was not however on the sale of the article that they looked for a profit; but from the commodities which they were obliged to accept in exchange, and it was here the chief mischiefs were found. Many of these commodities were of the contraband description, and such great quantities of these were annually brought into the Province, through the medium of this trade, that the public revenues were constantly kept much lower by a large amount, than they otherwise would have been. Not only so, but the conscientious and upright trader, who vended no articles but those on which the regular duties had been secured, was thereby seriously injured; and worse than all, this illicit traffic powerfully tended, as all of that description invariably does, to corrupt and destroy the whole moral system in those who were engaged in its prosecution, and to sever those ties of allegiance and attach-

ment which are the main supports of the government of a country.

With the exception of the owners of the quarries, who might receive a temporary profit from the trade, scarcely any among us who were concerned in its prosecution could be said to be benefitted by it. On the contrary, we were draining our very vitals, to secure to the people of the United States those advantages of which we ourselves stood so greatly in need. To them indeed, very extensive profits resulted from the trade; by the carriage of the article to the ports in their territory where it was disposed of for consumption; and to the consumer, who procured an article so greatly required, at a lower price through that medium, than he could have obtained it at through any other.

These remarks are meant to apply to the trade in this article which was carried on with the people of the United States, previous to the late war with that country, and for some time after its conclusion. As the restrictions however which were for some time upon it, no longer exist, and it is again wholly pursued through the same destructive and poisonous course, it is believed that the same observations will at present apply to it.

To a person of the slightest reflection, it must surely argue great political blindness, or an uncommon want of prudence and economy in a country, which possesses an article so readily and cheaply prepared for market as the one of which we have been speaking, and for which there is an extensive demand in an adjoining country, to permit the trade in it to run constantly in that channel, in which all the advantage is derived to the latter.

It might here seem in some measure appropriate to

the design of the observations contained in these sheets, to point out some regulations which might be adopted, to render the export of this article, lucrative and beneficial to the Province. An attempt to that effect would accordingly be made, if it were not conceived, that a continuance of the recent restrictions imposed by the American government, relative to a trade with these Colonies; or the event of another war with that country, (which from the hostile disposition it continually displays towards Great-Britain, it is seriously to be apprehended will take place before long), will either of them very much reduce, if not wholly put a stop to this pernicious and unprofitable traffic. An endeavour will be made in some subsequent pages, to show to how much better purpose, than in any trade whatever in this article, the labour of the Province could at present be employed, in Agricultural pursuits, and in the improvement of the many natural advantages it possesses.

These advantages, notwithstanding the assertions which have been made of the unfruitfulness of its soil in general, and of the existence of a variety of circumstances, which will ever operate to prevent our rising to an opulent and prosperous condition, will be found upon a candid and unprejudiced investigation, to be numerous and important.

The fisheries of different descriptions, to the conducting of which such facilities present themselves on every part of our coasts, even under present circumstances, contribute to our advantage in a very considerable degree: and with a proper attention to those objects, with which their success is intimately connected, and in particular to agriculture, they might be made one of the principal sources of our wealth and general prosperity. It is chiefly through these, we are enabled to procure from the West Indies an ample and regular supply of those articles, which are now considered as making part of the necessaries of life; and on these we must ever in a great mea-

sure depend, for the prosecution of our commercial pursuits.

The number and excellence of the harbours of this Province, are also to be considered as greatly to its advantage; particularly as respects the prosecution of the fisheries in the several modes in which they are carried on; and by the safety and convenience, with which the coasting trade is in consequence conducted. Many of them are of a description which will afford security to vessels of almost every burthen; and are well situated for the prosecution of an extensive foreign trade.

In almost every part of the Province, great quantities of lime stone are found: in several places quarries of free stone of an excellent description, as some of our buildings will testify; and the extensive Mines of Coal in the eastern quarter of it, are certainly to be considered a most valuable treasure.

These latter, will doubtless in course of time give rise to a trade, which will be carried on not only to different parts of the Province, but the other quarters, and contribute in no trifling degree to advance our prosperity. This article, is indeed almost the only one furnished among ourselves, the supply of which to the people of the United States, through the trade we pursue with them at present, is conceived to be much for our general advantage. Although such a portion of our labour, could not at present be very well spared from other employments, as would be sufficient for a very extensive working of these Mines, yet such an increase of the labouring class, it is trusted will be found before long, and such a reduction in the price of labour will take place, that we shall be able, greatly to extend and improve not only this, but every other source of advantage we possess.

Our climate, it must surely be conceded is a very healthy one ; and although the season of vegetation is not of very long continuance, it will be found, that it is superior in several respects, to that of a number of countries, which through skill and industry have carried agricultural pursuits to the greatest perfection. Only the two essentials just mentioned are wanting, in order that the same may be accomplished here. The scantiness of our crops which at times has been found, and indeed some of the total failures of them which have taken place, may very justly be attributed, as much, if not more, to the neglect of making a proper use of the earliest part of the season of vegetation, as to the shortness of its duration, or any other cause. In many parts of the Province, the attention of one set of husbandmen has been so greatly directed to other pursuits, during almost every part of the year, that they have neglected at the proper period, to place their grounds in that state of preparation, which would enable them to put in their seeds, as early as skill and experience in their occupation would require. By reason of such neglect, they have often been employed in making a hurried and defective preparation of the soil, at a time when the seed should be in its bosom, or rising above it. The consequence has frequently been, that an unkindly frost in the autumn has disappointed their hopes, and rendered all their labours unavailing, by destroying in the course of a very few hours nearly all those fruits of their fields, which if their seeds had been sowed sufficiently early, would then have been secured from its power. Another class, through extreme unskillfulness in husbandry, have suffered their doubts and their fears about sowing their seed at too early a period, to cause a similar delay, whereby they have been made to experience a like unhappy result of their labours. In proof of what has here been advanced, may be mentioned, what is well known to have been often the case, that of farmers residing in the same settlement or neighbourhood, they who having been skilled in their occupation, and attentive to its pursuit, have sown their grain as early as the season would at all permit, have reaped a plentiful har-

vest; while they who have delayed to put it in until a later period, have been left to bewail the reverse. More particular observations will hereafter be made, relative to the causes of a delay so fatally injurious, and of the little attention which has been hitherto bestowed among us, to the acquisition and improvement of skill in agricultural pursuits.

Pursuing still further our inquiry into the natural advantages possessed by this Province, the great quantity of timber it contains of the most useful and valuable descriptions, must certainly be mentioned as one of the most important among them. This article has indeed for many years past been exported to a very great extent, with what degree of advantage to the Colony in general, is not however so easy to determine, very different opinions being entertained on the subject. The exporting merchants can speak best respecting the profits of this trade, as it has been found upon an attentive observation, that except them, few who have had any thing to do with it have in the end improved their circumstances.

With respect to the soil of the Province, it will in general be found by the skilful and industrious farmer, of a description which cannot afford him any reasonable cause for complaint. Much has of late been very justly said in its favour, by a writer in one of our weekly papers, who has gone through such a course of scientific and judicious observations upon Agricultural subjects, and set forth such urgent and powerful arguments to induce a closer attention to them here, as have fully entitled him to the grateful acknowledgements of every well wisher to the country.

Without attempting a chemical analysis or explanation of the nature and properties of those ingredients

which are employed in nourishing and bringing to maturity, the several products of the earth; and endeavouring to show to what extent they exist in the soil in the different parts of the Province, it may safely be affirmed from facts and experience which enable the most illiterate to judge, that in several places, for the raising of grain of various descriptions, and of those vegetables which are most commonly required for the use of man, it is fully equal to that of most countries in the world.—It is declared by many, whose veracity there is no reason to doubt, and who are well acquainted with the soil in general in most parts of the Continent of North America;—that there is scarcely a State or Province throughout it, in which within the same extent of territory, a greater portion of land of a valuable and fertile description is contained, than is here to be found. We possess, it is well known some very extensive bodies of it, lying together, which in some instances of skilful cultivation have actually proved that their powers of production are as great, and that they can be made to yield and bring to perfection, as great a variety of the most useful products, as the most fertile soil in some of those Countries which have greatly excelled in agricultural pursuits.

The misfortune with us has ever yet been, that in general the vegetative powers of our soil, have not been sufficiently understood or called into exercise. The indolent or unskilful husbandman, when he has failed of receiving the fruits of his fields as abundantly as he hoped and expected, will be ever more ready to charge it to their unprolific nature, or to any other cause, than to suspect any deficiency or fault in himself. Hence, have arisen the whole of the complaints which have sometimes been made by husbandmen and others among us about our climate and soil.

The first step towards improvement in every art and employment in life, is to become acquainted with our ig-

norance respecting it. It will be well therefore for our husbandmen, in the course of their endeavours to increase their skill in their occupation, to reflect candidly and seriously with themselves, upon their past miscarriages, and to strive to ascertain their true and genuine causes. If they are sincere in those endeavours, it is indeed a reflection, which upon some occasions, they will almost of necessity be led to make. Should they in entertaining it, and in seeking after improvement in their occupation, discover as they assuredly will, that the scanty harvests they have sometimes received, have been owing to a deficiency of skill, or some such inattention or delay as has lately been spoken of, rather than to any lack of vegetative power in the soil, they surely must and will, be thereby animated and encouraged in their future exertions.

In making still further observations respecting our soil, it may be mentioned in part illustration of what has been advanced in its favour, that from one of the eastern districts, where agricul ture has not arrived even at the same state of improvement in general, that it has in some other parts of the Province ; and where the attention of the people has constantly been in a great measure led off to other pursuits, large quantities of wheat were many years ago frequently exported. There too of late years, except when those afflicting dispensations of Providence were experienced, in nearly the total destruction of the crops, from which no country has been always exempt, there has been found a surplus of grain and flour produced within it, which has been disposed of in a neighbouring district and in other places. In some parts of it, the returns from grain of various descriptions, and particularly from wheat, have even under a moderately skilful cultivation been surprisingly great. The same has been known, with respect to a great portion of the land under cultivation, in most other quarters of the Province. Even the soil about the Capital, which it is notorious is naturally as steril and unproductive, as almost any we have, has under skilful cultivation been made

to yield in what may very fairly be termed, uncommon abundance. Upon the whole it is by no means too much to affirm, that taking the soil of the several counties and districts in general, there is not one of them, in which a sufficient portion of bread might not be produced for the consumption of its inhabitants, even by the number of them at present engaged in husbandry; while in some a superabundance could certainly be furnished.

It is true there are some who deny these positions, and from whose conversations and dogmatical assertions, a person unacquainted with the Province would be led to imagine, that the soil is and will ever remain steril and unprofitable, that most of the bounties of nature here spoken of have been lavished to no purpose, that some cause or other will always operate to prevent their extensive improvement, and that we must forever continue dependent upon some other country for the first necessary of life. To say that such language proceeds from a disposition in those persons, to thwart and injure the interests of the Province, would be judging them too harshly. It may however be said with propriety of some of them, that they are ignorant of its local circumstances and general characteristics, and therefore are blameable for their rashness and presumption, and of others that they are of that indolent and weak disposition, which becomes alarmed and discouraged when the slightest obstacles arise, and which sinks before those difficulties which present themselves in every country, in the first stages of its settlement and improvement.

Others there are, who hold that it would be useless and unavailing to make any great exertions for the improvement of these advantages, or to strive to multiply our means of defence against foreign attack; for that this Colony with all the neighbouring ones, will inevitably fall into the possession of the United States, and be retained by them as a part of their territory. In con-

formity with this opinion, some of these dastardly and contemptible spirits are not ashamed to avow, when they can do so with safety to their selfish schemes, that in the event of an attempt at its conquest being made from that quarter, they will yield no sacrifice in its defence which they can possibly avoid, but will as far as they can, observe a neutrality, and ultimately join with the party prevailing.

These sentiments, it may be shewn them, may probably prove as injurious in the end to their true interests, as they are contrary to the ties of allegiance and duty under which they are placed. Persons of this lukewarm and indifferent disposition on political subjects, and who profess to have no attachment to one form of government more than to another, any further than their private interest is concerned, are despised or thought lightly of by all, and through every change still remaining suspected, can seldom reap much advantage from any.

The case of this Province is at present totally different, from what that of the British Colonies, which now compose the American Union, was at the time of their revolt. They conceived that they were oppressed, and that those rights which pertained to them, and that constitution which their forefathers had received and enjoyed were invaded, and finding all their remonstrances fail of procuring the desired redress, they flew to arms, asserted their independence, and the separation which eventually took place, may chiefly be charged to that unwise and unjust policy respecting them which then prevailed in the councils of Great-Britain. In that contest, it was even perfectly justifiable for each individual to side with the party which he felt a conviction was in the right. Without attempting to discuss the important points which were then in dispute, or to hazard an opinion upon them, it is consistent with the obligations of allegiance and duty to observe; that although it is imperiously required of every individual to remain loyal

and obedient to that government which is entitled to claim his attachment and support ; yet that he is never bound to relinquish the inalienable rights of his nature, or that freedom which the constitutional principles of his country has granted him, and that they who resist systematic and continued attempts at oppression, can never with justice be stigmatized as guilty of rebellion.

Here no such causes of complaint can be urged as were advanced on that unhappy occasion. Our rights are respected and preserved to us inviolate ; not the slightest attempts are made to impose burthens upon us ; but each individual enjoys all that liberty of every description which is compatible with the safety and welfare of the society at large.

Let such as entertain a partiality towards the institutions of that country, and may be inclined to extol the boasted liberty of its people, inform themselves of the taxes and public burthens which even now they endure ; let them learn the extent of those privations and inconveniences they underwent during their late contest with Great-Britain ; and then let them reflect upon their own almost total exemption from any such burthens ; on the protection, the abundance, and comforts they enjoyed during that period ; and surely they will become satisfied with their situation, and be solicitous to preserve and improve, the blessings and advantages they have now in their power. To the wavering and dissatisfied on political subjects, such inquiries and reflections may be well recommended, as they will conduce not more to establish their repose, than in all probability to further their interest.

The people of that country should be looked upon by us, in the same light with any other description of foreigners, : and in any attack they might make upon us, should upon every principle whatever, meet with as vig

orous and determined resistance as should be offered to other invaders. If they should be ultimately successful in any such attack, we may rest assured, that we should not be treated any better by them, than the people of conquered countries have generally been by those who subdued them. Let such as may be inclined to suppose, that in making such attack, they would exercise any uncommon degree of humanity and forbearance from violence, reflect upon the cruelties and devastations which it is so notoriously known they committed, in the invasions of the Canadian Provinces; where the intercourse with them had been more intimate and extensive, than it has even been with us; and surely they must be convinced, that we should not receive less distressing and barbarous treatment.

Our language towards them, has indeed been too strongly expressive of dislike and resentment; and we have too strenuously endeavoured to annoy them whenever we could, to expect that if they had us in their power, they would treat us with much magnanimity, moderation, or favour. They would view us with jealousy and distrust, and although such as would submit to renounce their former allegiance, and to enter into obligations of adherence to their government, might probably be allowed to retain their possessions; yet undoubtedly they would not permit us to enjoy equally with themselves all sources of emolument and advantage.

In addition to all these considerations, let those who may feel the indifference which has been spoken of, be assured that we are considered by Great-Britain of too much importance, for her to permit us to be finally wrested from under her dominion: and therefore, that should the government of the United States, even succeed at any time in obtaining a temporary possession of the Colony, such vigorous and powerful exertions would be made to regain it; and such determined resistance throughout

would be made by all truly loyal subjects among us, that they would not be able to maintain that contemptible neutrality they would wish. They would quickly be discovered; and any backwardness or reluctance they might show to stand forward and exert themselves in defence of the country, would eventually meet with the treatment it deserved. Let such therefore, in time be warned of the consequences of cherishing that disposition, let them instantly determine to maintain their allegiance through every vicissitude; and reflecting on the many blessings they at present enjoy, resolve that if ever the hour of trial should arrive, they will show the sense they entertain of their value, by their vigorous efforts to ensure their continuance.

Here, our attention may naturally enough be directed to the conduct of those, who professing themselves to be British subjects, and being under the ties of allegiance as such, are satisfied to remain under the government of that country which entertains such a hostile disposition towards us. Not only while amicable relations in profession subsist, are great numbers of those persons, there to be found, contributing by their pursuits to increase its wealth and resources; but there did many of them willingly continue, doing the same, while open hostilities prevailed, and were to all outward appearance espousing and supporting its cause. Such persons are not worthy of belonging to any government whatever. They must be conscious that no confidence is placed in them where they are, and their shallow professions of attachment to the British government, cannot shield them from the contempt of all its truly loyal and dutiful subjects.

Among the celebrated nations of antiquity, scarcely any punishment was more dreaded by the individual than an exile from the country of his birth. By many who possessed ardent and powerful feelings, even death itself was preferred before a continuance in that state. Among

those also, scarcely any species of conduct was conceived more base and detestable, or punished more severely, than for the native of any country voluntarily to withhold from it his support, when it was engaged in hostilities with another. Each individual then ranged himself under the standard of the country of his nativity; and scarcely any other emulation subsisted, than who should yield the most extensive and magnanimous sacrifices, or display the most powerful exertions to preserve its independence and freedom.

In modern ages, notwithstanding the well grounded boast of superiority over those nations in the advantages and refinements of civilized life, and with regard to the humanity and even courtesy which is exercised in the practice of war, those patriotic exertions and feelings have undoubtedly experienced a decay. Too great a proportion of those who belong to the most highly civilized States which at present exist, and who enjoy the greatest portion of political advantages, have found other objects than their country whereon to employ their affections and labours. The importance at present so universally attached to the possession of wealth, (which is almost wholly to be ascribed to the great prevalence of commercial pursuits) has made the obligations of allegiance and duty to be too generally esteemed of little consideration, when placed in competition with the views of self-interest.

But leaving the particular investigation of the causes which have produced the decay which has been spoken of, to the speculative and philosophical, we may proceed even consistently with the maxims of the most contracted and selfish to observe; that if what has been stated respecting the many natural advantages possessed by this Province be correct, a variety of motives may undoubtedly be urged to induce their improvement. Those advantages now are exclusively our own, and as we are

encouraged and protected in their free and liberal enjoyment, it greatly behoves us to preserve them in our power.

However lightly we may esteem them, the government of the United States is fully sensible of their importance and value, and therefore is so earnestly desirous of possessing them. To enable it to effect this favorite object of making them its own, whenever a convenient season presents itself, no pains or exertions does it spare. Its late commercial regulation, by which our vessels are precluded from entering the ports of its territory, and all its restrictions imposed upon trade, so far as they affect us, are evidently intended, to prevent as far as possible our improvement of those advantages either for annoyance or defence: and so to weaken and dishearten us, that the object of desire may be more readily and effectually accomplished.

While this course is pursued on one hand, on the other that Government is equally vigilant to enlarge and improve its own means of offensive operation. Its navy is greatly increased; a very formidable military force is kept up and employed, in making encroachments and in the commission of hostilities upon the people of one nation or other, as though for the express purpose of inuring it to the scenes and the habits of war; and every measure is pursued, for improving the discipline and skill of a powerful body of militia. In short, it is sufficiently obvious, that its most vigorous exertions are engaged for enlarging all the resources of the country; and for exciting one common sentiment and disposition throughout it, relative to the favourite design already explained.

If therefore we are satisfied with the tenure under which we possess those advantages, and are desirous of retaining them; if we cherish a love for the happy con-

stitution under which we live; and for the laws which secure to us the freedom and privileges we enjoy; if those among us who were born in the country, feel any attachment to their native seats; we should rouse from the legarthy and indifference in which we have long been unhappily sunk, and use our utmost exertions to increase our means of resistance; so that the hour requiring their employment may find us prepared. If we neglect the present season for so doing, we may hereafter awake as from a dream, and with the bitterest regrets, find for the first time in the employment of those advantages by others, the extent of their importance and value.

The present period of tranquility is the one, when the means of improving the permanent sources of our prosperity and of preparing for their defence, can most extensively and effectually be employed. It is incumbent therefore, upon all classes and descriptions of persons among us, who wish well to the country, to lay aside all party views, jealousies, and distinctions, and as those whom we have every reason to be satisfied are envious of the advantages we enjoy, are uniting in the design of seizing on their possession, on some favorable occasion, immediately to become united also, in preparing for their defence, and in the determination to struggle for their preservation to the utmost extremity.

In this loyal and patriotic course, those who fill the first ranks and occupy stations of trust and importance among us should certainly be found to take the lead, and should exhibit a striking and magnanimous example. These, should not rest from employing and directing the resources of the country, and from stimulating and encouraging the industry, the enterprize, and zeal of all others, for promoting those important and laudable purposes. As it is indeed the duty of every individual to use his endeavours for effecting the same, so there would be few but would find such conduct contribute in the end

to the advancement of private advantage. If each one could be persuaded to view his own interest as involved in that of the whole, which undoubtedly in a great measure is the case, and to act in conformity therewith, with the numerous advantages we possess, the general prosperity would quickly experience the most rapid increase. After pursuing such a course, if even when called upon to repel any hostile invasion, success should not attend us in our patriotic exertions, we should enjoy the consciousness of having acquitted ourselves of our duty ; and remain free from those self reproaches and unavailing regrets, which in the case of improvidence or neglect, never fail to augment and embitter, every species of deprivation or suffering.

In the progress of our exertions to improve the advantages we possess, we shall also become more sensible of their value, and consequently be invigorated in the pursuit to extend them ; and more confirmed in the determination to yield every sacrifice which may become necessary for their preservation. It is certainly not yet known from experience, and indeed is conceived but by few, how far some of the principal sources from which our prosperity must be derived, are susceptible of improvement, and can be made to contribute to our general advantage. It is frequently the case with states as with individuals, that the most powerful means within their reach of advancing their wealth, or ensuring their comfort and safety, either long remain wholly neglected, or receive but a very partial developement. Either industry or enterprize are wanting to call them into exercise.

Through the pursuit of the patriotic and laudable course recommended, the strongest inducements and encouragement will arise, to an increase of the population of the colony, by emigration from different quarters, of such a description of persons as will afford that additional assistance we require. Even without the direct and

pointed endeavours of the government of a country to increase its population, it is almost universally found, that this augments in proportion to the developement and improvement of the advantages it is discovered, or known to possess. Men will naturally resort where the situation is made to hold forth the most alluring invitation. In the present day therefore, when the most extensive emigrations are taking place, and when, as has been already observed, the thirst after gain is much more prevalent and powerful than patriotic attachments, population is most effectually to be encouraged and increased, by the extension and improvement of the sources of individual profit.

It may also be urged as a motive to excite us to employ and continue our patriotic exertions, that the increase of our wealth, population, and general prosperity which would certainly follow, would lead the parent state to attach such still further importance to our remaining under its government, that we should receive more extensive encouragement, protection, and support.

Many other arguments may be found, and motives set forth, for stimulating our endeavours to improve the advantages in our power; but surely by such as will take time seriously to reflect upon the present situation of the Colony, and upon the hostile designs which are cherished against it, those which have been mentioned will be considered sufficiently urgent and powerful. We hear many of them indeed advanced every day, but with the exception of some recent, and it is much to be feared only extorted and occasional promises of vigorous exertion, by far the greater number of those who employ them, exhibit in their general conduct, very little solicitude about effecting the objects to which they are applied. Complaints, have we also frequently heard, and still do we continue to hear, of the defect of patriotism and public spirit, and of the apathy and indifference with respect

to those objects, which pervade all ranks and descriptions of persons among us; while none will be found willing to admit that they ever existed, or at present exist in themselves.

Here, it cannot surely be thought irrelative to the subjects just treated of, nor appear altogether an improper, or unprofitable employment, to investigate the leading causes, to which those defects, and that indifference may be attributed.

The first step towards reformation and improvement, as well with societies as with individuals, is to ascertain the nature and full extent, of the faults and follies with which they are chargeable. It surely is better to be convinced of these, in the voice of our own unbiassed reflections, or to hear them from a friend, than to learn them at a period, when a consciousness of their magnitude, can only tend to foster unavailing regrets and reproaches, or to swell the triumphs of an enemy.

It may probably be objected, that such an inquiry and exposition has been rendered unnecessary, for that the reformation and stimulus it would seek to produce, has already been effected; that we have recently become fully convinced of our former follies and neglects, and of the true causes of all our miscarriges; and that a spirit of patriotism, industry, and enterprize has been so universally aroused and called into exercise, that without further warning or admonition, our general prosperty will speedily experience the most rapid advancement.—It may in answer be observed, that there is generally danger in the cases of vehement expressions of a sudden alteration in public sentiments, habits, and views, that it is not radical, and of a nature which is likely to continue; but that it is merely occasional, and will depend for its duration upon the novelty of the mode which was

employed to effect it; or upon the existence of some temporary circumstance. The improvement in those respects which is likely to be durable, is generally gradual in its progress; and requires to be constantly cherished. It is only by vigorous exertion, and unshaken perseverance, that habits which have long had the predominance are subdued and wholly eradicated. Men too generally require not only to be told of their errors, but to be frequently warned against their repetition; and to be often reminded wherein their true interest consists. If therefore it should even be conceded, which it certainly is not, that the indolent have of late become suddenly industrious; the careless and indifferent about the public prosperity, assiduous and zealous to promote; the intemperate, sober and regular in their habits; the selfish, liberal, and the extravagant economical and provident; yet still as it must be admitted, that we are but in the first stage of reformation, we should be as candid in reflecting upon errors and follies but recently abandoned, and as patient under censures upon them, as attentive to the call to still further improvement. The language of reproof and admonition may often with strictest propriety, be associated with that of invitation and encouragement.

Moreover, it is conceived, notwithstanding all which has recently been advanced relative to our general interests, that the genuine and principal causes of the tardy progress they have hitherto made, have not yet been sufficiently and comprehensively set forth and explained.—While some have attributed it to a deficiency of skill, for the improvement of one of the chief sources of our prosperity; and others to a general defect of public spirit and enterprize, none, whether from misconception, design, or apprehension of personal consequences, have imputed it to those causes, to which it may with the strictest justice be ascribed;—to the habits and manners which have long been prevalent among us. These, it will be found upon candid and unprejudiced investigation, have throughout every class and order of persons, been of such descriptions as deserve the severest animadversion.

To commence with the higher and middling classes of the society, it may be observed ; that habits of luxury, dissipation, and extravagance have prevailed throughout these, and particularly among the latter, to an extreme and fatally injurious extent. These habits, it is probable may with some in the capital of the Province, have had their origin in an improper imitation of the style and fashion of conduct, observed by the principal characters in the extensive military and naval establishments which have been kept up for the protection of the Colony.—The manners of these, seldom or never fail to have a striking effect, upon those of most of the persons in civil situations, among whom they are placed.

It is not here intended to insinuate, that they are to blame, for any ill consequences of that description which have proceeded from their residence among us. They are here for our own protection and defence ; their conduct in general is entitled to our esteem and respect, and such as is consistent with their stations and honorable employments. It is the imitation of their manners and fashion of life, by those whose pursuits are totally dissimular ; and whose conduct and views should be regulated by different standards, that is deserving of censure.

This, however has had but a very limited operation and effect in forming and establishing the habits complained of. They have chiefly been engendered and confirmed, through the wealth which at particular periods, suddenly flowed into many individuals engaged in commercial pursuits.

The mercantile interest has ever been the prevailing, and indeed it may be said the overbearing one in this Province. During the late arduous and long continued contest between Great-Britain and France, but more

particularly during hostilities with the United States of America, a variety of circumstances concurred to render our commerce extremely flourishing and successful. The rapid acquisition of wealth, by many engaged in its speculations and pursuits, and the extensive prospects of gain afforded thereby, affected nearly all orders and descriptions of persons; and stimulated numbers, to enter upon that apparently speedy course of improving or establishing their fortunes. The mania for embarking therein, was so universal and powerful, that some quit the plough, others the work-shop; and disdaining their simple and quiet occupations; and dissatisfied with the gradual, but certain profits they were acquiring therein, rushed at once into all the bustle, the intrigues, and perplexities of trade.

Of these, a great number were in truth unfitted for its pursuit, in point of education, being so illiterate, that they could not even keep or adjust their own accounts with any kind of propriety or correctness; and were only qualified for the simple but honest employments they had left.

Many who had been engaged in forwarding the Agriculture of the country, (that only permanent source of its prosperity) were now found in all, even the most remote situations, hourly employed in administering the means of intoxication, and doing all in their power to corrupt the morals, and prevent the industrious exertions, of all who resided in their poisonous, and destructive neighbourhood.

During those periods of commercial prosperity, some possessing superior information and skill, and being more enterprizing, acquired large portions of wealth. Of these, not a few posessing weak and diminutive

minds, in the course of its acquisition, could not forbear its ostentatious and gratifying display ; and in the ardour of enjoying it, launched into scenes of luxury, dissipation, and extravagance, deserving of the severest animadversion and censure.

Others, who were not so successful, were influenced by their example, and impatient of delay until the means of securing the continued gratification of their weak, or vicious desires could be obtained, rushed at once into the same rounds of folly and dissipation ; in which they became satisfied to exhaust the profits of their employments, as they were daily acquired.

All ranks and descriptions of persons seemed infected with the same lust of luxurious indulgence ; and scarcely any other emulation or competition appeared to subsist, than who should surpass in splendour of equipage or dress, or in the extravagance and profusion of festive entertainments.

While the season of prosperity continued, it would have been accounted a proof of extreme ignorance of the modes of civilized life, and even rudeness of manners, to have sought for a shop-keeper behind his counter, or a merchant in his counting-house, after a certain hour in the day. A stated portion in the middle part of it, was adjudged sufficient for attendance in those places : the remainder was exhausted in the enjoyments of the convivial board ; and a late hour in the night, found the same persons at the gaming table ; or engaged in some frivolous but expensive amusements.

Some, there undoubtedly were, who refrained from those excesses ; and who employed their utmot industry and prudence, during that period of prosperity, to se-

cure the means for their future comfort and support: but the observations which have been made, will upon candid and unprejudiced reflection, be found too generally to apply. In describing the habits and manners of a people, they are only to be spoken of in general terms.

From the prevalence of those scenes of dissipation a lamentable defect of public spirit ensued. Each individual being wholly engrossed with his own schemes and prospects of immediate gain, and his private gratifications, no exertions were made for promoting the welfare of the public: or for placing it on those firm and durable foundations, which alone could ensure its advancement, when a change of affairs should take place.

Immersed in dissipation, the majority appeared to imagine, that the season of prosperity would have no termination. They did not reflect, that the circumstances which then concurred so highly to favour the commerce of the Colony, were merely what may be termed extrinsick and adventitious: and that during their operation, some of the principal sources of its permanent prosperity, were receiving no extension or improvement whatever.

Those favorable circumstances have ceased to exist; and the consequences which have followed from the extravagant and dissipated courses just mentioned, have been too wofully disclosed, and are too universally known, to require a particular or laboured recital. The numerous insolvencies which almost immediately ensued, occasioned the greatest public agitation and distress. The failures of some, who were extensively employed in mercantile pursuits, and who had deeply engaged in those rounds of folly and extravagance, accelerated the downfal of great numbers of others; and that credit and confidence, which when restrained within the ordinary

limits of prudence, afford vigour and extension to trade, appeared to be shaken to the very foundations. In the Capital of the Province in particular, the most gloomy distrusts and apprehensions prevailed; and to abundance and rejoicing, misery and despondence succeeded.

But the evil consequences of those habits did not stop here. As is ever the case, they produced a disregard of all honest and moral obligations. Many of those persons, had not virtue and fortitude sufficient to struggle with their embarrassments and difficulties; and to strive by a course of honest industry and prudence, to satisfy the lawful demands which were against them, but soon after their failures were known, or through dread of impending insolvency, absconded from the country.

The gaols were for some time crowded with others, who after being released upon giving up what they chose to declare themselves possessed of, (which but seldom was worth the acceptance of their creditors) either left the Province also; or remained as mere drones, or burthens within it. Some of these are still to be seen among us, whose former extravagance and habits of dissipation, have rendered them too proud and indolent, to turn to the labour of cultivating the soil of the country; and who will scarcely exert themselves in any way, sufficiently to procure even a scanty and miserable subsistence, for themselves and their families.

Those courses of dissipation and folly, are still however pursued by great numbers to an extent which is highly deserving of blame; and quite inconsistent with the state of the Province in general. It is to be trusted however, that the warnings which their consequences have so recently and fully afforded, have had beneficial effects on the majority; and that it will be long before they will again be so universally and fatally followed.

They must ever, but particularly under the circumstances at present existing, have the effect of retarding the general welfare of the Colony ; and if persisted in, can only be expected in common, to lead to the same unhappy results to individuals, which of late they have so extensively produced.

The season of bankruptcies it is true has for some time been over; and our domestic affairs have assumed, and have latterly borne a tranquil, and even rather a cheering appearance : but it was sufficiently observable, that a general lethargy and despondence respecting the public prosperity, succeeded to those scenes of agitation, distress, and insolvency, which if continued in full force, would have proved nearly as injurious, as those rounds of luxury and extravaganee.

The opportunities which have been lost can never be recalled ; but much may still be done for promoting public as well as private advantage, by those who are made sensible of their errors ; and who will employ fortitude, resolution, and perseverance, in endeavouring to retrieve them. These qualities it can seldom be too late to exert. They will afford the best atonement for former imprudence ; and may yet shield us from some of the most formidable evils, with which we are threatened.

While the prevalence of those dissipated habits, throughout the classes which have been mentioned, have been injurious to the welfare of the Province ; there are others which respect the inferior and more laborious orders, which have hitherto been, and yet continue to be, even still more pernicious and destructive to its interests.

The peasantry of a country, are for a variety of rea-

sons, to be considered the most truly valuable and important description of persons within it. On their general habits and character, its safety and welfare must ever be chiefly dependant. Industry, temperance, and prudence among them, will obviate or overcome, nearly every natural or political defect or disadvantage. Even under the most arbitrary, and oppressive systems of government; and with the greatest hardships, and difficulties to encounter, possessing those estimable qualities, they will render the country they inhabit, in a certain degree prosperous and flourishing. On the other hand if the opposite characteristics belong to them, the most wise and happy institutions and laws, are useless and unavailing; and all the bounties of nature they possess, as to them have been lavished in vain. Poverty and distress, will generally be their portion; and their political freedom and safety will ever be insecure and precarious.

To every person who has had opportunities of observing the manners and habits of the more laborious orders of persons in this Province, it must be strikingly apparent;—that the vice of intemperance is prevalent among them, to an alarming and fatal extent. There is even too much reason afforded whereon to ground the belief, that but very few countries can be found, in which it has more generally prevailed, nor in which it has produced more pernicious, and destructive effects. Here, not only men of every age indulge in the excessive use of intoxicating liquors, but the tender season of youth is corrupted, by initiation into the same vicious and ruinous practice. It is not at all uncommon, to see young persons who are still under the guardianship and authority of their parents, and who reside under their roofs, loitering about the taverns, and seizing every opportunity afforded them of partaking of the means of intoxication. They are not ashamed or afraid, to appear before their parents or the public, in that disgraceful situation. Indeed the former, too generally, could not with any force or consistency reprove them; they themselves daily af-

fording the pernicious example. Truth will too sufficiently warrant the assertion, whatever degree of sorrow, humiliation, or regret may be felt in advancing it, that from even the season of boyhood, to the latest period of age, the improper use of those liquors, is in general, as freely followed and indulged in, as opportunities will allow.

During the most precious seasons of the year, while the husbandman and the labourer should be employed in depositing the seed in the earth, in securing the harvest, or in the other labours of the field; they are too frequently found rioting in intemperance, in those places which can be termed little better, than sinks of vice and debauchery.

A great portion of the profits derived from the labours of the farmer, the mechanic, and others pursuing the most useful and valuable occupations, and which should be employed in the education of their children, and in providing for the comfortable maintenance and support of their families, are exhausted in indulging that fatal propensity. What numerous examples may be found, of persons who once possessed the comforts of life in even an abundant degree, and were what is usually termed, quite easy and independant as to worldly affairs, who through its pursuit and indulgence, in the course of a few years, have been reduced to insolvency and wretchedness; and whose possessions have in one form or other, eventually been grasped and secured, by those who supplied them with the means of destruction.

The evil is indeed so great in some parts of the Province, that a road even through the most unfrequented and newly formed settlements, can seldom be travelled, without meeting with persons, reeling with intoxication, and bearing with them the means of continuing the debauch.

To all who are sincerely desirous of seeing the Colony prosper, it must undoubtedly be matter of sorrow and regret, that such facilities are afforded to the continuance, and even to the increase, of this most fatal impediment to the advance of its welfare. In every village and settlement within it, too true it is, that these facilities exist to the utmost extent. The great numbers who enjoy permissions for the free and unlimited supply of the means of intemperance, imply a censure upon those by whom they are granted; who certainly should be the most forward and solicitious, for repressing the evil.

It would even seem, as though intoxicating liquors, were here esteemed, among the chief necessaries of life. In many parts of the Province, nearly every other house is a tavern, in which scarcely any other refreshment, or comfort can be obtained by the traveller, than what thay may be calculated to afford him.

Through the frequency of open and habitual drunkenness, it has come to be too generally considered, as even hardly a crime; certainly not as one of a very degrading, or heinous nature. A man may continue its practice to a very great extent, without his moral character appearing to be much injured in the eyes of the community at large. Our law it is true considers it an offence; but how rarely is the punishment prescribed, carried into effect.

Upon proper reflection however, it will appear, that no vice is more fruitful of others, nor is productive of more miserable and ruinous consequences. The time alone which is exhausted in practicing it, is of serious importance in a young country like this; where the utmost industry and perseverance is requisite, in all classes and descriptions of persons. But independantly of the time thus sacrificed, it produces a constantly prevailing

dislike, to every species of industrious and active exertion, and an habitual carelessness, and improvidence of disposition.

It may also be said, that it almost universally leads to poverty, and all the extremes of misery and distress. How many families do we see, who once enjoyed all the comforts of life, reduced to beggary and wretchedness, through the practice of this vice by those whose duty it was, to have laboured to shield them from those evils! What numbers are there among us, who instead of contributing any thing to the welfare of the society, through this fatal cause, are the greatest burthens upon it! How many young men, who once bid fair to become ornaments to the community, and to yield it the highest advantages, have been cut off in the prime of their days!—how many are daily to be seen, bearing about them the marks of a ruined constitution, and wholly unfitted for every useful employment;—entirely from an indulgence in the intoxicating draught.

This vice more effectually than any other, corrupts and destroys the whole moral system. Our reasoning powers, and moral perceptions, have been wisely and mercifully bestowed, to enable us to restrain and regulate our passions; those constant opposers of our happiness. While those powers and perceptions are subdued, or suspended, by a state of intoxication, the passions are powerfully excited; and their deluded victim will be readily led to commit, the most vicious and abandoned, or the most mean and contemptible actions. The greater number of those who are addicted to this vice, become in its progress, habituated to falsehood, fraud, and injustice. Whatever appearances they may assume, or professions they make, they are in general undeserving of confidence, and in the season of temptation, their price will be found to be small. In order to procure the means of gratify-

ing this vicious propensity, they will enter into obligations and promises, they have not the least intention of performing ; and without the slightest compunction, will for the same profligate purpose, appropriate those products of their labours, which should be applied to the discharge of demands the most conscientious and just.

All attachment to country is weakened or destroyed, by a habit of drunkenness, and its miserable slave is too frequently left, without the power or the spirit to defend his possessions, in the hour of danger.

It would indeed be almost a task without end, to enumerate the evils resulting from the practice of this vice; let it suffice to say, that it tends to corrupt and extinguish the best feelings of the heart, the most valuable principles of the mind; and leads to the disregard and destruction, of all moral and social obligations.

Such are the habits, the follies and vices which may too justly be laid to our charge. To their unlimited prevalence, more than to any other cause, has it too surely been owing, that the Province has not arrived at that state of abundance and prosperity, in which its numerous advantages have promised to place it. It is in vain to expect, that any material improvement will take place in our situation, while those obstructions remain, so fatally formidable. It is therefore the duty of all who wish well to the country, to exert their utmost endeavours to remove or reduce them.

What the eloquence of the preacher, or the maxims of the moralist, fail to produce, the warnings and the admonitions of the politician, will sometimes effect. Men are in general more powerfully roused to exertion, by the apprehensions of present danger, than by any con-

sideration which relates to futurity. From hence it will follow, after what has been stated respecting the propriety of our entertaining those apprehensions, that no time should be lost, in employing assiduous and unremitted exertions for securing our safety.

It was not by indulging in habits of extravagance and intemperance, that the people of the northern parts of the American Union, attained to that height of power and importance, which at present they occupy. Their forefathers, in the earlier periods of the settlement of those countries, had equal, if not greater difficulties to contend with, than any which have ever been experienced here. Temperance, industry, and perseverance however were their prevailing virtues; and these still continue to exist among their descendants, to an extent which the most invincible prejudice alone, can forbear to applaud and respect. In many of their largest towns, where commercial pursuits are prosecuted to the greatest extent, and consequently where luxury is in the greatest degree prevalent, it is said, that with the exception of those hours, which are indispensibly requisite for refreshment and rest, the merchant, the shopkeeper, and all other descriptions of persons, are almost constantly to be found, in the patient and active prosecution, of their respective occupations and callings. Those who are employed in the husbandry of the country, are also in general industrious and sober. Among them indeed it is said, that the man who is found in the practice of intoxication, is quickly subjected to degradation and disgrace. His credit becomes forfeited, and his company is shunned and avoided, by all who entertain a regard to reputation.

In the character of every people, there are some things to praise as well as to blame. While therefore we cherish a regard for our own institutions; and condemn the craft and dissumulation, so notoriously pre-

dominant in the people of those States ; their temperance, industry, and enterprize, are highly deserving our closest imitation.

The power and the safety of a country, are ever in a greater measure dependant upon the character of its people, than upon their numbers or wealth. This position is sufficiently proved to be true, by the numerous instances recorded in history, of States, in many respects of but little consideration, and with numbers comparatively trifling, successfully resisting the attacks of the most mighty and formidable Empires, and atchieving the most glorious and magnanimous exploits, in preserving their independence and freedom. The estimable qualities which have lately been mentioned, will triumph over every difficulty ; and eventually establish a state pf prosperity. The opposite characteristics, produce imbecility and corruption, and are the most frequent and powerful causes of the downfall of nations.

To the prevalence of those habits has it also greatly been owing, that with the exception of the Agricultural Societies, which have but just now received their existence, so few associations have been heretofore formed in this Province, having for their object, the advancement of the public prosperity. Of the small number which have at different periods been established, some exhibited but little exertion in the cause in which they embarked, and speedily came to a dissolution ; while the individuals composing others, were too narrow-minded and selfish, to furnish those means which were requisite for carrying their views into effect ; and their support soon became a charge upon the revenues of the country. Endeavours have not however been wanting, on the part of persons having the furtherance of self-interest in view, to engage the Province in undertakings, which would tend to involve it in bankruptcy and ruin.

Upon taking an impartial retrospect also of our public affairs, it will be found, that many circumstances have occurred in connection with these, which have operated to injure the interests of the Colony. Among the number which might be mentioned, none has been attended with the pernicious effects, which have followed from the party disputes and dissentions, which in a former administration of the government of the Province, prevailed among those, who had the management and disposition of its reveuues. Without a certain degree of cordiality and unanimity subsisting among the persons, in whom that important trust is reposed, it is in vain to expect, that in a young country like this, the public prosperity will experience a very rapid advance. For a very considerable period, instead of such a spirit being predominant here, the proposal of a measure by one party, however judicious and well intended, was almost sufficient of itself, to occasion its rejection with another. That confidence which gives energy and effect to all public measures, was not to be found, and jealousies, distrusts, and dissentions, were alone kept in exercise. Those sums of money which should have been applied to the most important and beneficial purposes, in consequence of those dissentions, remained more than once, unappropriated in our treasury; and those resources of the Colony, on which its welfare must ever chiefly depend, were left without the least stimulation or encouragement.

It is of little importance to inquire, what party was in the greatest measure to blame; but the lesson those dissentions afford, should not pass unregarded. All who wish well to the country will unite in the hope, that a similar state of things will not speedily occur.

But this cause was not the only one of a public description, which had the effect of retarding our prosperity. If we look a little farther we shall probably be as-

tisfied, that the weakness and injudiciousness of several measures of that nature, which have here been adopted and pursued, have had the very same tendency and effect.

In observing upon subjects of this nature, it doubtless is proper to employ terms of guarded deference and respect, and if the expression may be permitted even sometimes of indulgence. A temperate and liberal discussion respecting them, may frequently however be productive of good. All such, the spirit of our free and happy constitution, rather seeks to encourage, than to stifle or suppress. It is a privilege which British subjects enjoy, to speak openly and boldly, but at the same time respectfully, of every proceeding in which their rights or their interests are concerned.

Entertaining the most friendly and patriotic intentions, it may therefore be remarked, that one of those measures, has been an expenditure from our revenues in the erection of public buildings, which may well be termed lavish; and far from being warranted by the state of the Province and the extent of its resources. These, contribute it is true to ornament the capital; and this is indeed the chief argument we hear urged to justify or excuse that improvident expenditure. But surely it will not be contended, that it is ever either wise or politic to forward such a purpose, to the sacrifice or neglect of those objects with which the general prosperity of a country is connected. This, however, has been too extensively the case in the instance before us. Our conduct herein, may be likened to that of many individuals, who are satisfied to lavish what would ensure them a comfortable maintenance for life, and even to deny themselves many comforts, in order to exhibit an ostentatious display in equipage and dress; or to indulge in extravagant and luxurious enjoyments.

It would indeed appear, as though we were desirous with our limited means, of vieing in the extent and the splendour of our public buildings, with countries far advanced in improvement, and possessing the most ample and liberal resources. This Province, it should be recollected, is yet but in its infancy; and in it, as in every other country in that state, prudence and economy should chiefly be studied.

The Capital of a country and the other parts of it, always should, and indeed generally do, bear a proportion to each other in improvement and forwardness.—The interests of the two are so inseparably connected, that if the former is enriched and embellished, and by a conjunction of favourable incidents, should attain the most prosperous and flourishing state, while the latter remains neglected and indigent; they both will in general be found, either sooner or later, in an equally weak and impoverished condition. In this Province, for a considerable period of time, many circumstances concurred to destroy that proportion; and to render the former comparatively the most wealthy and flourishing.

While the late hostilities with the United States were subsisting, under apprehensions of attack from that quarter, very extensive means were here accumulated and provided, by the imposition of duties and other expedients, for the purpose of supporting a defence of the Colony. As the danger which was menaced, never actually overtook us, it is natural enough to inquire:—in what manner have those means been disposed of? It is sad to reflect, that so little has been done with them for improving the permanent sources of our wealth and prosperity; and that not only are the funds thus accumulated entirely exhausted, but that in our paper currency, we must recognise an extensive debt as existing against us; which at one period or other must surely be discharged.

With the sums which have been expended on those buildings, beyond what could be justified by the measure of our means;—how much under prudent management might have been accomplished, for enriching and improving the Colony at large!

Among our public measures, the lavish expenditure which has been spoken of, is however far from being alone deserving of remark. The weakness and inefficacy of some others, which professed to have the advancement of the general prosperity for their object, can scarcely escape observation. These have almost entirely consisted in the granting of bounties; which is far from being always the most effectual mode, of stimulating industry and enterprise. One at least of those bounties—that upon Salt—which will be spoken of more fully hereafter, was exclusively pocketed by a few, who did not require and should not have received it. It would be difficult to shew by a statement of facts, and unsophisticated reasoning, that it contributed in the slightest degree, to effect the ultimate purposes for which it was professed to be granted. That which was bestowed to encourage our Agriculture, although it was received by those for whose benefit it was intended; yet our continual dependance upon a neighbouring country for bread, sufficiently shows, it has not been productive of the anticipated improvement.

In conformity with the course of investigation and remark, which has been professed to be pursued in these sheets, it is now time to enter separately and pointedly, into a consideration of the different sources, from which the general prosperity of the Colony must be derived; and to endeavour to point out and illustrate the means, which can most effectually be employed to extend and improve them.

It need scarcely be remarked, that, Agriculture and

Commerce are two of the principal sources, of the wealth and prosperity of every civilized country. In this Province, to these, the Fisheries must undoubtedly be added. Upon our improvements in these three, but particularly in Agriculture, must our welfare be ever dependant.

In treating of these subjects, the order in which they have been mentioned, (which is taken from their relative importance) will not be observed; because not in accordance with the course of inquiry and remark, which it is conceived is the most regular and consistent herein to pursue; but our Commerce will first be taken into consideration.

What will be said respecting this subject, will go further to prove the advantages it has long continued to enjoy, than to show that under present circumstances, it requires any additional stimulation and assistance of a public description.

Commercial pursuits it has already been remarked, have acquired in the civilized world a preponderance even rather too powerful. The lust of gain so universally prevalent, and which these chiefly contribute to nourish and increase, threatens indeed to swallow up almost every other sentiment and feeling.

From an examination of the history of several countries, which have attained great eminence in these pursuits, it may be discovered, that they have very little tendency, to illustrate and improve, the nobler and more estimable qualities of the human character. If is curious to trace in that of the nation to which we belong; their progress; the different opinions which at different periods have been entertained respecting them, and the

effects they have produced upon sentiments and manners. For many centuries after the earlier and more authentic records of its history, commercial employments were held in very little estimation; and they who pursued them, were considered as scarcely ranking above the lowest order of the people. They have progressively increased in respectability and importance in the general opinion, and at present maintain the most preponderating influence; and even claim to be ranked with the most learned and liberal professions.

It were needless and unprofitable, here to inquire, with what degree of propriety such a claim is advanced. After all which may be asserted on every side; the true rule by which to judge of the distinction to which any profession or occupation is entitled, is, to consider how far its habits and the scenes in which it is usually exercised, are calculated to improve the ardour and sensibility of the heart, and the vigour, the magnaminity, and the elevation of the mind.

Those pursuits, it is true, have contributed to improve the exterior of life; but it may very reasonably be doubted, whether their great prevalence, has tended to augment the sum of human virtue and happiness.

Every state of man, from that of rudeness and even barbarism, to that of the utmost refinement in manners and in arts, has its advantages and defects. In his rude and artless condition, although deficient in those more gentle and insinuating qualities, which embellish, or give a charm to so many of the scenes and occupations of life; he is found to possess those which chiefly ennoble and dignify his nature, in their fullest vigour and extent. His principal characteristics, are an ardent devotedness to the cause of his country, and a fervent and unshaken attachment to his kindred and his friends. To these, he

clings through every vicissitude; and from the defence and protection of these in the hour of danger, no threats can deter, no proffered rewards can allure him.

In a state, in which his manners are highly polished and refined through the extreme and long-continued influence of commercial pursuits, he is too frequently found to be insidious, deceitful and base; ready to trample upon the rights of others, and to sacrifice the best feelings of his nature, to his avaracious and selfish desires. With him all attachment to country, is now made to depend upon gain. Let him be deprived of this, no matter in what manner, and the tie is immediately severed. Secure him in his possessions, and he will readily acquiesce in any change which may be proposed.

There always undoubtedly are many, engaged in commercial pursuits, who are exceptions to these observations; and whose integrity, patriotism, and liberality of mind, the habits of their calling cannot corrupt; but the description which has been given, on candid examination, will in general be found too correct.

Those occupations, when pursued within ordinary bounds, have certainly contributed much to the ease and the comfort of life, and been productive of many other beneficial effects. From them, many of the improvements made in society have wholly arisen; and on their moderate pursuit, does society itself in the present state of the civilized world, greatly depend for support. What has here been advanced with respect to them, is meant merely to show the general tendency they have to engender and nourish that insatiable desire of gain, which leads to general corruption; and to weaken that patriotism and public spirit, in which the strength and the safety of a people must ever chiefly consist. These are the fatal effects, which are most to be guarded against.

Of all the sources, from which the improvement and prosperity of this Province are to be derived, Commerce is the one, which has long enjoyed the greatest portion of advantages ; and which at present stands the least in need of being stimulated and encouraged by legislative regulations. It is indeed that interest, which wherever it becomes firmly established, is most likely to make its way good. Under free constitutions like ours, it requires from Government little else than protection, and a careful watch, to prevent and suppress the frauds and mischiefs it is so likely to introduce.

In this Province, an Association has long since been formed, styling itself a Committee for promoting the Trade, Fisheries, and Agriculture of the Colony. From what has ever been done by this body to forward our Agriculture, it would be difficult to discover, why it received any share of its notice. On taking however another view of the subject, it may be discovered, that there were solid reasons for naming it ; and in truth, that there was not a little policy in the measure. With the exception of one individual, it is believed that this committee has ever been solely composed, of persons engaged and interested in trade. With the Agriculture of the Country, they do not concern themselves ; and in general appear to care littte about it. Aware however, that it must ever be regarded by numbers, as one of the principal sources of the prosperity of the Colony, they thought proper to name it in the style of the Association, judging prudently enough, that an additional degree of weight and importance would be thereby afforded to such public representations as they might make, in behalf of the interest of trade. Taking into consideration the spirit of their calling, it was not indeed to be expected, that they should have been the first, to make any exertions for forwarding our Agriculture ; or that they should have thought of it any further, than it could be instrumental in assisting their own particular schemes of aggrandizement and profit.

Of all people in Society, traders may least be expected, to do any thing out of the line of their own immediate advantage. Monopoly, and exclusive possession and enjoyment, constitute indeed the very spirit of trade.

In conformity with this spirit, the association here spoken of, has ever displayed the utmost partiality and contractedness, in all its measures and views. These, have ever been solely directed to the benefit and increase of commercial pursuits. For the advancement of these, it has not indeed manifested any degree of remissness; but on the contrary, has employed the utmost exertions, to render their influence and predominance throughout the Province as powerful as possible; and to bear down every interest, which could be supposed to militate in the least with their particular benefit.

In proof of this, may be adduced the petitions and public representations, made and strenuously urged by this Committee, at different periods. The language of these, has uniformly been characteristic of traders,—intent only upon forwarding their own projects of gain.—Such representations, this committee has never failed to put forward, whenever there was any probability of their being attended with success: and they have ever been supported with a zeal and perseverance, and not unfrequently even vehemence, which together with the partiality of their nature, have sufficiently discovered the motives whence they sprung.

If this association had viewed our Agriculture in any other light, or thought of it for any other purpose, than what has been mentioned, with the influence it has ever possessed in our Legislature, and the weight and importance which its representations have in general borne, it certainly could have accomplished much, for the advancement and improvement of that first and most

valuable of our interests. In the course of the long period of time it has been in existence, it might assuredly through the exertion of that influence, and from earnest and persevering endeavours, have effected those results, which have recently been accomplished through the patriotic and laudable exertions, of an unknown individual,—namely, the formation and establishment of Agricultural Societies; and not only the excitement of a general desire for improvements in husbandry, but the diffusion of information relative to the most approved and suitable modes and systems of culture. It might at least, with the utmost facility and readiness, have introduced into the country, the most convenient and suitable implements of husbandry, together with seeds of the best qualities, and the most agreeable to our climate, and the varieties of our soil. Such effects, were never procured through the instrumentality of that association, because such exertions and influence were never employed.

The fisheries, it is true, as being immediately connected with the trade of the country, have been treated of in some of the public representations and statements made by that association; but the regulations they have proposed, have invariably been calculated, to ensure the whole profit and advantage to the trader; and to leave the fisherman to toil in the same indigent and embarrassed condition. The memoir upon the fisheries, which was some time ago published by this committee, has solely for its object,—the obtaining of a bounty upon salt, to go directly to the merchant importing it; and even goes so far, as to disapprove of granting any bounty whatever, immediately to the fisherman.

To the representations made by this association, has it chiefly been owing, that regulations have been from time to time prescribed and established, both by the parent state and our own Legislature, which although

highly favorable to the trading interest, have not tended to place the prosperity of the Province at large, on a firm and durable basis. Among several of this nature, which might here be set forth, may even be mentioned, the measure but recently adopted, and which by some is so highly extolled ;—of allowing us a trade with the United States, more free and unrestricted than before was permitted. This subject, which certainly must be viewed by us all, as one of importance in its nature and tendency, and which will seriously affect either in one way or other the general interests and welfare of the Colony, shall presently receive a particular and pointed consideration.

Notwithstanding all the advantages, which our commerce at present in reality enjoys, we still hear many among us engaged in its prosecution, complaining of the restrictions (comparatively trifling) under which it is placed. It would appear from their language on many occasions, as though, they thought it but reasonable and proper,—that, the interest of the whole British Empire, together with that of all the rest of its colonies, should be made subservient to the trade of this Province alone, or rather, to their own particular and contracted desires and projects of gain.

On candid and liberal inquiry, it will be found, that the advantages they at present enjoy, are numerous and important. Many of these, have been granted by the Government of the Parent State, and not a few by our own Legislature.

The former, has laid open every part of the Empire itself to our trade ; and has not only made it free and unrestrained to most of its colonies, but has for some time past, afforded to our intercourse with its West-India Possessions, every stimulation and encouragement,

which could with consistency or propriety be granted. With many foreign countries also, we are permitted to carry on trade, under certain regulations, which to preserve the welfare of the Empire itself, it was necessary to impose. These, upon liberal and unprejudiced reflection, cannot be considered as oppressive; nor indeed, as restraining in any serious degree, the advancement of our solid and permanent interests.

Even, under the restrictions to which our trade with those countries is made subject, we are enabled to obtain from thence, many articles at a much lower rate, than they can be procured for consumption, by our fellow subjects in Great Britain. We also enjoy a similar advantage over them, in the use and enjoyment of many articles of foreign growth and produce; and also of many productions of the colonies of the Parent State, which we acquire in a direct trade with the latter. There are even, many articles of the manufacture of the United Kingdom itself, which we have at much lower prices, than they can there be consumed.

The extensive drawbacks allowed upon the exportation from thence, to these colonies, of articles which can be legally brought into them, secure to us these important advantages; and prove, how truly solicitous the parent country has ever been, to promote our prosperity. The duties which are retained upon such exportation, are indeed comparatively trifling. It may be said, that the drawbacks thus allowed, are an advantage to the British exporting merchant, and are intended for his benefit; but though, such without doubt is the case, yet surely the principal advantages are derived to us; as, whatever might be the duties retained on the articles, we as the consumers would ultimately pay them.

In these colonies also, we have long enjoyed a pre-

ference and advantage, in the supply of many articles of their growth and produce, to the United Kingdom, of the same descriptions with which it is furnished, from several foreign countries. This, has been particularly the case, with respect to the supply of timber, and lumber of various descriptions; of which such great quantities are yearly exported to it, from these colonies. On these, no duties worth mentioning are imposed, while those which are paid upon the same articles, of the growth and manufacture of foreign countries, are very extensive. With such preference and encouragement, if our trade in those articles has not proved lucrative to all concerned in its prosecution, and generally beneficial, the blame can only rest with ourselves.

The free and open trade, which has recently been authorized and permitted, between the port of Halifax and certain foreign countries, as to many articles in which we could not before trade with them in a direct manner, is obviously designed to benefit our commercial interest; and doubtless will contribute to do so, in a considerable degree.

Through this medium, we shall greatly extend our market for many articles, of British and West-India produce and manufacture, by the supply of them to the people of the United States; to a trade with which country, the act authorizing that intercourse was chiefly intended to apply.

Our traders, and some other classes among us, will also, without doubt, reap a similar advantage, with respect to some articles, which we can furnish from among ourselves, particularly gypsum, coal, and fish of various descriptions. As to the latter article, by the the increased demand which a supply to the people of those States will occasion, the prices will be enhanced, which will as-

sist and encourage our fishermen. If even the demand from that quarter, for this article, should be so very extensive, as greatly to reduce its export to the West-Indies, and to turn the supply of it chiefly to those States, (which is not much to be apprehended) yet we shall be enabled in its place, to supply the former with the flour and other articles, which we shall obtain in exchange from the latter.

Such, are some of the advantages which are likely to be derived to our trade, from the intercourse thus allowed; but many things will doubtless arise out of it, in some measure to countervail them, and even to injure that interest. Among several which may be readily thought of, these may be mentioned;—more extensive facilities will be thereby afforded, to the introduction into the Province, of articles which are still of a contraband description; and of our circulating specie, (of the scarcity of which our mercantile people have for a few years past so grievously complained,) we shall most likely be drained more effectually than ever.

If our trade with the people of the United States was as open and unrestrained upon their part, as it has been made upon ours, we might expect to reap greater benefit from it. Their commercial regulations, which have recently gone into operation, by which we are prevented from supplying them directly in our own vessels, with such articles as they might require, operate very powerfully against us, and debar our trading interest, of many advantages it would otherwise enjoy.

In every view which can be taken of the subject, it is on the other hand perfectly clear;—that, to the people of those States, the greatest benefit will result from the present trade and intercourse with them. With their usual policy and selfishness, they have by their re-

gulations just spoken of, secured the balance completely in their favour, and indeed, can experience nothing but profit from the trade, should it be continued upon its present footing. They enjoy the sole carriage between these colonies and themselves, and while they have it in their power to supply us, almost on their own terms, with a surplus of their own products and manufactures, they obtain from us in exchange, not only those British and West-India goods they require, but some articles with which we can immediately furnish them; of which they stand greatly in need, and cannot so cheaply or conveniently procure elsewhere.

With respect to our Agricultural interests—many apprehend, and not without reason, that it will be very materially injured through the trade thus permitted.—Whatever might have been the case of this Province, thirty years ago, or even at a later period, yet it may safely be asserted, that it would have been more to its real and permanent advantage, not to have had for many of the last years, any intercourse whatever with those States. We should then have been thrown in a great measure, upon our own resourses; and would have been under the necessity of exercising more industry and economy, and of making those exertions, which, before this time, would have placed us in a state of abundance and prosperity.

It surely, never can be for the interest of any country, to remain in a state of dependance upon another for bread: yet with us, unhappily, such has ever been the case. Under the local and relative circumstances of some countries, it may it is true, be good policy for them, to employ nearly the whole of their labour, in those commercial pursuits, manufactures, or occupations, which will contribute most to their profit and advantage; and to depend upon other countries, for some articles they may require. This, however, can never apply, with re-

spect to bread; nor indeed to such other articles, as are considered the chief necessaries of life. It must always be for the interest of every country, to withhold from all other pursuits, such a portion of its labour, as will be sufficient for procuring within itself, such a measure of these, and particularly of bread, as may be required for its own consumption.

Our present trade with the people of the United States, it is much to be feared, will tend to continue us in that state of dependance upon them, for flour and grain of various descriptions, under which we have so long unfortunately remained. The ground of this apprehension, is, the facility with which those articles may now be procured from thence, in the greatest abundance; from which it is but too probable, we will be prevailed on to relax our exertions for obtaining among ourselves, a supply of them adequate to our wants. Should such be the case, it will for a variety of reasons be a subject for much regret, more particularly, as proofs have recently been afforded, of the excitement of a more general and zealous agricultural spirit; and of a desire to render ourselves independent of every country, as to those articles of prime necessity. Every well-wisher to the country, will unite in the hope, that nothing may take place, to check in the slightest degree, the progress of a disposition so truly commendable, and which at present, it is of such serious importance, to encourage and confirm. A number of good reasons might indeed be assigned, why, it would be highly imprudent and impolitic in us, to permit it to subside in the slightest degree, but this one in particular should suffice;—that it is much more than probable, that our trade with the people of the United States, will not long be continued on its present footing; and that such a change of affairs may take place, with respect to our intercourse with them, that we may experience a greater difficulty in obtaining those articles from them, than we have ever yet found.

In whatever point of view indeed, our present trade

with the people of those States can be considered, it will appear to tend to the injury of our Agricultural interest. There is scarcely an article the produce of our husbandry, which they require from us, or with which we could supply them, even if such was the case; while, most of the articles of which we stand much in need, which we can legally procure from them, through the present channel of trade, we might in the course of a few years, with an increase of industry, and some perseverance, procure among ourselves in sufficient abundance. Even with respect to Plaister of Paris, of which we possess such very great quantities, it is most likely, that we shall continue to furnish them with it, entirely through the present corrupt and unprofitable channel.

In another view which may be taken of the subject, our trade with the people of that country, may probably further operate to our general prejudice. Should it appear likely to continue for any length of time, under the present regulations, and be found very lucrative to those among us immediately engaged in its prosecution, such a number of persons may be induced to embark in it, and such a great portion of the labour of the country, may be taken up and employed in conducting it, (as was the case with respect to our commercial pursuits during the late war) that very serious injury will thereby ensue to our agricultural interest.

We have unfortunately, so long been accustomed to view every thing relating to our general prosperity, through the medium of trade, that too many among us have come to consider, that nothing can operate to weaken or retard that prosperity, which tends to the advancement of that particular interest. So far from this being the case, it is undoubtedly true, and in the course of these remarks, it is trusted will be sufficiently made to appear, that the very extensive and successful prosecution of commercial pursuits, which for a long period of time,

and until within a few years past prevailed in this Province, by alluring a disproportionate part of our population to engage in them, as well as in several other respects, operated to retard the improvement of our Agriculture, and thereby obstructed the advancement of the general welfare.

Even our fishermen, who form such a numerous and valuable class, did not enjoy during that period, advantages equal to what they since have possessed, consequently their situation, it will be found on inquiry, was then, more indigent, dependant and embarrassed, than even at present.

It is true, it is found in most instances, that as commercial pursuits are extended, and flourish and succeed, that the wealth and welfare of the country at large, in which they are pursued, are also promoted. There are many cases however, of their having been long and extensively prosecuted, without producing such effects; and without laying any solid foundation, whereon to establish and advance the public prosperity.

Upon extended and attentive consideration, it would appear, that these pursuits are more or less productive of beneficial effects, of a general description, and which are likely to remain durable, as the articles with which they are supplied, and about which they are occupied are in a greater or lesser degree, the produce or manufacture of the country in which they are conducted. This it is conceived may be taken, as a very fair criterion, by which to estimate the real and permanent advantages to be derived to a country, from the extensive prosecution of commerce.

If the articles which form the exports of any coun-

try, and in which its trade is conducted, are mostly of its own produce and manufacture, but particularly if they are chiefly the products of its husbandry, its trade can scarcely be encouraged and pursued to too great a degree. While this is extended, a proportionate increase of employment is afforded to its labour at home, for the procuring of the products and manufactures, with which to supply it. If even the trade of such a country, should experience a temporary stagnation or decay, from an alteration in the general channels of commerce, or from a change in political affairs, yet still, from possessing within itself the means for supplying the absolute wants of its population, and from its general prosperity having been gradually advancing, its distresses and embarrassments, will be less severe and extensive, and of shorter continuance, than they would have been, if its trade had been of a different description.

In such a country therefore as Great-Britain, where most of the articles in which its trade is carried on, are its own manufactures and products, or those of its colonies; and where agriculture is so highly esteemed, and so extensively and successfully pursued, commerce cannot flourish, without producing profitable effects upon every other interest.

On the other hand, if the trade on which a country is greatly dependant, and which it is extensively engaged in pursuing is one, to which but few articles the produce of its husbandry, or of home manufacture, are supplied, but which chiefly consists, in procuring from foreign countries, the chief means of subsistence for its population, the general prosperity of that country, will seldom be raised very high, and will always be insecure and precarious. Such a trade may long continue flourishing and successful, and many of those directly engaged in its prosecution, may even amass much wealth, but so soon as it suffers any decrease or tempo-

tary suspension from a change of political affairs, or from any other cause, the extremes of general distress and despondency will speedily ensue.—Not only so, but the duration of these unhappy effects, and the return of general abundance, will entirely depend upon the return of trade into its former profitable channels; to whatever period this may be delayed. The welfare of such a country, will ever fluctuate with the fluctuations of trade; and the events of a war, or the success of a fortunate or favorite rival, will presently reduce it from a state of abundance and rejoicing, to one of bankruptcy or ruin.

It is upon the internal improvement of a country, and the measure of the chief necessaries of life, which it is made to supply to its population, that its solid welfare and happiness must ever depend.

There probably never was a country, where commerce was more unconnected with husbandry, than it has hitherto been in this colony; and where its success and advancement contributed less to the promotion of general prosperity. It has even been the case, as has already been in some degree explained, that the success of this interest here, operated for a very considerable period of time, greatly to impede the Agricultural improvement of the country. This was chiefly owing to the nature of our trade,—which has hitherto been one, to which scarcely an article, the produce of our husbandry was supplied for exportation. The ability to furnish for that purpose, any considerable portion of articles drawn from this source, appeared so difficult of attainment, and to lie at such a hopeless distance, that our mercantile people were led to disregard and to undervalue this interest; and to consider their success in their pursuits as not at all depending upon its advancement; and consequently they employed no portion of their capital, and used no exertions or influence to promote it

The trade at present carried on with the people of the United States, is of the very same description; and it is too much to be feared, will produce the same injurious effects with regard to our Agricultural improvement.

It may very reasonably be doubted, whether in any country, (but particularly in one of very recent settlement) which does not supply the chief means of subsistence for its population to a sufficient extent, any trade can be considered beneficial and profitable, which raises the price of those means upon home consumption. This however, in our case, has most assuredly already been done, through the trade of which we have been speaking. Although the advance in the prices of fish, which have taken place through its operation, will certainly benefit our fishermen; yet such great quantities of this article, are here consumed by the indigent and laborious classes, who are not engaged in the fisheries, that with respect to them, such advance will operate very much to counterbalance the advantages derived to the fishermen.—With regard to those articles of British and West India produce, which here are consumed, many of which may even be considered of prime necessity, the advance in their prices which is likely to take place, and which indeed in the case of several of them has already taken place, through the operation of this trade, may also be placed in opposition to the partial advantages which it may be admitted will flow from it.

It has thus been attempted, to specify and illustrate the benefits and disadvantages, we may probably experience from this trade: and the observations which have been made with respect to the latter, go chiefly to show, that they can only arise from its long continued and extensive prosecution.

There are, it is true, many differences of opinion on the subject; some conceiving, that this trade will operate greatly to promote our general prosperity; while others exclaim, that it will prove the ruin of the Colony. Neither extreme is very like to occur. It has already been observed, and may be repeated, that fo a variety of reasons, it is not very probable, this trade will long be continued, and if this opinion be considered well founded, there is not much foundation for very elevated hopes or expectations upon the one hand, nor for very serious alarm or apprehension on the other.

Having enumerated some of the advantages, bestowed upon our commerce by the Parent State, it may now be shown, that it has ever been highly favoured and encouraged by our own Legislature. Such petitions and representations as have there been presented, in behalf of this interest, have ever met with ready and attentive consideration, and the object sought after, has in general been granted. The influence it has ever maintained in that quarter, has indeed been sufficient, to insure the success of almost any measure, which might there be proposed in its behalf.

Our laws, which relate to our commerce, are as free and as liberal, as they could safely or consistently be made;—the duties imposed, have ever been as moderate as they well could have been, having respect to our absolute wants;—and if considered in an unprejudiced manner, must be admitted, to have never been such, as any way seriously to embarrass or injure our trade. Those, which were imposed, for the purpose of raising the means for supporting a resistance against the hostile attacks with which we were menaced, during the late hostilities with the United States, were withdrawn, immediately upon the termination of the season of alarm. Much better would it have been, as many will now be found to acknowledge, if those duties had been longer

continued. They would not in the least, have restrained or lessened the consumption of the articles on which they were imposed ; and we should not have been obliged to resort to that extensive issue of paper currency, which has since taken place, and through which, in reality we have again become deeply in debt. It is highly probable, that for the purpose of discharging the debt thus incurred, and providing the means for meeting the public supply indispensibly required, we shall ere long, be under the necessity of imposing the very duties which so were withdrawn, and at a period too when they cannot so well be endured.

Pursuing the course of inquiry into our domestic policy, which it has been designed herein to observe, the fisheries form the subject, to which our attention may next be directed. Such a number of the inhabitants of this Province, on every part of its coasts, are engaged in the prosecution of these, and our commerce is so intimately connected with, and indeed so materially dependant upon them, that they must certainly be considered, as constituting one of the principal sources from which we must seek to derive our general prosperity.

Whatever have been the causes, certain it is, that few who have been immediately engaged in carrying them on, and have chiefly depended upon them for procuring a livelihood, have eventually been enabled to improve their circumstances, in any extensive degree. It has been found upon attentive observation that far the greater number, and indeed nearly the whole of them, have remained year after year, in peace as well as in war, in the same indigent and embarrassed situation ; constantly struggling with difficulties and hardships, and at the termination of every season, in dread of being deprived by importunate creditors, of the slender portions of property they possessed. The amount of the outfits, they are almost invariably under the necessity

of procuring from the merchant upon credit, and consequently at very high prices, is generally so great, that the whole profits of the season, if it is even an ordinarily successful one, will scarcely discharge it; after affording a bare subsistence during the time to themselves and their families. Whatever have been the prices of fish allowed by the merchant, the prices of articles furnished by him to the fisherman, have been in such correspondent proportion, as always to keep the latter, in the same needy and embarrassed situation.

This, doubtless, affords matter for serious and attentive consideration; and it is of the highest importance, to investigate the true causes, to which the necessitous condition of that numerous and valuable class of people has been owing. An endeavour to that effect will presently be made, and also to point out, how alone it is apprehended, their situation can be essentially improved.

Our mercantile people, have attributed the slender profits acquired by the fishermen in pursuit of his occupation, in a great measure to the low prices of fish, in the markets to which it has in general been exported; in consequence of which, they have not been enabled to allow those prices to the fisherman, which would ensure him a liberal profit. The prices in the West-Indies, have it is true, at different periods and especially of late years been very low, owing to a variety of causes, which it is unnecessary here particularly to specify. Some of them,—as the increase in the consumption of meat, in lieu of fish, in that quarter of the world, had commenced their operation, previous to the commencement of the present season of general peace and tranquility; but most of them have since arisen; and indeed necessarily followed the cessation of hostilities.

It will not here be admitted however, that the rea-

son thus assigned is the true one, why our fishermen are not at present in more independent and comfortable circumstances. It has already been observed, and is a fact which will sufficiently refute such an argument;—that their real profits were not greater, nor their situation in any degree more prosperous and comfortable, during those periods of the late war, when they were receiving the highest prices for their fish, than they have at other times been. This, was owing to their outfits at those periods, having been correspondently expensive.

We must look in another quarter for the genuine cause, and it will be found, where some have never thought it worth their while to search for its existence, and others from motives of self-interest, would not allow that it rested: it has been—the great neglect of Agriculture in this Province, and our shameful dependance upon other countries for bread; whereby the fisherman almost constantly, but particularly during the former non-intercourse system adopted by the United States, and the late war with that country, was obliged to pay for that article the most extravagant prices. This subject, will presently be more fully treated of and explained.

It may here be remarked—that, whatever differences of opinion have prevailed, as to many points relating to our fisheries, a thorough conviction, that they have for some time past been in a depressed state, and that the situation of the fisherman has been such as here described, has without doubt universally existed. Public expedients have at different times been recommended and adopted, to afford them stimulation and assistance; but they all have entirely failed of producing those effects. They have been of such a nature, that their application may be compared,—to administering palliatives to a sickly and disordered body, and neglecting to apply the cordial medicine at hand, which alone could restore

health and vigour to the constitution. They have entirely consisted—in granting of bounties of different descriptions, at different periods: none of which, unless we may except that, which for a certain period existed on the tonnage of vessels engaged in the fisheries, operated ultimately to benefit the fisherman, whom they were professedly granted to encourage and assist; but were all in one shape or other pocketed by the merchant.

Of all the modes, by which any trade, manufacture, or occupation, may be stimulated and assisted, that of granting a bounty, may for several reasons be considered as the least adviseable; and should never be adopted, without very strong circumstances to justify it; and until it shall clearly appear, that the objects in view, can in no other way be effected.

If any manufacture is found unprofitable, any invention, through the employment of which, a greater quantity of the article may be produced, with a smaller portion of labour, or the adoption of any other expedient, which will operate either to enhance its value, or to reduce the labour employed in its production, will cause such manufacture to revive and become profitable. If trade becomes languid and unproductive of gain, the removal of restrictions or the establishments of regulations, tending to facilitate and enlarge it, will produce similar good effects. By such modes, a greater portion of industry is excited and employed; and instead of any thing being taken from the hoard of the Society at large, it is greatly enriched and improved.

With regard to bounties,—an opening is too commonly found for great frauds in obtaining them; and not unfrequently are they diverted from their intended course, and never come to the hands of those for whose benefit they were granted. Instances might be cited,

from histories of the political economy of several countries, and in particular of the one under whose government and protection we are, of the existence of such frauds; and of large sums of money being taken from their public funds, in the shape of bounties, without in the least degree effecting the purposes they were intended to answer.

Independently of these considerations, it must always be remembered—that, the revenues of a country, are in general derived from the contributions in one form or other, of every individual within it; and that, unless through the operation of the bounty, a return is made beyond its amount, the society can never become richer; admitting that the whole of such return is received by the individuals belonging to it. If it fails in its operation of replacing such amount, by reason of its being employed in supporting any unprofitable trade or employment; or any part of it, should in one shape or other, be received by strangers, the society indubitably must sustain a loss. It may therefore very safely be adopted as a general maxim—that it can never be sound policy in a country, to support by bounties, any trade, manufacture, or calling, which is likely to continue unprofitable.

It has been laid down by many, who have written the most ably upon political economy; and can be shown to be well founded—that, there can scarcely arise more than two cases, in which it can be expedient or necessary, to bestow a bounty upon any trade or manufacture.—The first, is—to establish and set a going, any one which had not before been on foot in the country, the prosecution of which, there is every reason to conlude, will prove generally beneficial, and which private means and exertion would not be sufficient to set forward; the other is—to assist in keeping up or reviving, any one in which a country has been extensively engaged, or whereon from any circumstances, it is materially dependant;

and which is in a state of depression, from causes which there is every probability will soon be removed. In almost every other case which can be thought of, a bounty is unnecessary ; and will only tend to diminish the public stock.

It is in general the best policy, to leave every trade and occupation, to adjust itself to the wants, or the state of the country in which it is prosecuted ; and to find its proper level and proportion. A sufficient portion of labour, will naturally run into any one which is found to be profitable to those engaged in its prosecution ; and to endeavour by bounties, and legislative regulations, to lead it into one of a contrary description, can only tend to withdraw it from those pursuits which are productive ; and must assuredly prove injurious to the general interests of the society.

If any occupation or calling, which has been extensively prosecuted in a country, and been found productive, suddenly ceases to be so, from any change of affairs ; and is likely to continue unprofitble ; the labour employed in it, will in general, soon direct itself into some other channel. Argument, and advice may frequently with advantage be offered, to show the prudence and propriety of such change. Legislative regulations, however, should very cautiously be employed to effect it ; and bounties, seldom avail much for the purpose.

If our fisheries were likely to continue unprofitable, and could only be supported by bounties, it would certainly be prudent and adviseable, to draw off the labour which is engaged in their prosecution, and employ it in other pursuits, which would prove more productive. They are not however in such a desperate situation, as to render such a measure expedient or requisite. Moreover, such a great proportion of the people of this Pro-

vince, ever have been, and from their local situations, ever will be, in a great measure dependant upon them for subsistence, that they will always be prosecuted to a very considerable extent. Upon this account, and also considering how essential they are to the support of our commerce, it is expedient and politic, to afford them such stimulation and encouragement, as will render them more profitable, to those engaged in their prosecution.

It will hereafter be shown, that it is very possible to assist them, without taking a shilling from our public funds. As bounties, however, have been so frequently resorted to in this Province, that it has become almost a matter of course to grant them, it may not be amiss, to make some observations upon those which have been heretofore bestowed with the intention of encouraging our fisheries; and also endeavour to show, if they must be made use of for that purpose, how they may be applied the most beneficially.

The one, which has been the most strenuously urged and recommended by a certain class of our mercantile people, is—a bounty upon the importation of Salt: which was an expedient devised by them some years ago. This, they have not failed ever since to clamour loudly for obtaining, and whenever withheld to manifest the utmost disappointment, and even vexation. The motives, for the expression of such feelings will sufficiently appear, when the whole matter relative to that bounty, comes to be laid open and explained.

The persons alluded to, as being the most strenuous advocates of this measure, have invariably been found to be—the importers of the article. By their vehement and confident assertions, of the great general advantages to be derived from it, they have it is true,

succeeded at times, in procuring to their endeavours, the assistance of some disinterested, and in many respects even very judicious persons. Those, however, have not taken the trouble to satisfy themselves, from diligent and attentive inquiries of their own into the whole subject; but have been contented, to receive upon credit, the assertions of those interested individuals.

The arguments, if arguments they can be called, which have been advanced in favour of this bounty, will upon very slender examination be found to be compleatly at variance with each other. One moment it is said—that salt in general bears such a low price here, that no person can afford to import it without a bounty thereon; and in the next—that, the fisherman is obliged to pay such a high price for it, that without one, he can never succeed in his calling, but must remain poor and dependant and that by allowing it, he will be enabled to procure this essential article at a lower rate. Both these arguments, cannot certainly hold good at the same time; and if considered separately, in an impartial manner, it will be found that neither of them is entitled to any weight.

It may be well in the first instance to understand, for what price the importer of it here, resident, or the owner in Great-Britain, can afford to dispose of it here, so as to allow him a reasonable profit. It is said, by those who are well acquainted with the subject, and is even admitted by many who are favourable to the granting of such a bounty—that, it may be sold without a loss, as low as ten shillings per hogshead; and that whatever it brings above that price, may be considered a profit.

It will be admitted, that it would not be an object o employ a vessel, to bring a cargo of it into the Pro-

vince, solely with a view to the profit to be received upon the sale of it, unless there was almost a certainty, of its bearing a price, much above that which has been mentioned. This, however, is not the mode upon which we are obliged to depend, for obtaining a sufficient supply of the article. We must look at the course and circumstances of our trade with Great-Britain, and in them we shall find the greatest facilities, and even inducements, to the introduction into the Province from thence, of such a supply of it at all times, as our consumption can be supposed to require. We may also discover—that no great profit is indeed expected to be made upon the sale of it here; particularly by the British owner.

The principal ports in the Province, into which fine salt is imported or brought from Great-Britain, are—Halifax, and Pictou. Most of the vessels, in which it is brought into the first mentioned port, are what are termed, the regular trading vessels between the two countries; and which bring us the dry goods, and other articles we obtain from thence; and on board of which, salt is frequently laden in order to fill up the cargo. Sometimes, even, a certain quantity of it is taken in by way of ballast.

Under those circumstances, it is not upon the sale of this article, that the importer here resident, materially depends for a profit; but upon the sale of his dry goods and other articles; and if he is to ship a return cargo, of timber or of any other description, (which is often the case) upon the sale of that, either here, or in the country to which it is to be supplied. He is under the necessity of procuring his supply of British and East India Goods from Great-Britain; and indeed the most of his European commodities from the same quarter; and while he does so, he is generally enabled with the greatest facility and convenience, through the same channel, to obtain such a supply of salt as he may think proper to order.

The case is somewhat the same, with the owner who ships it for sale here, upon his own account and risk.—If, he is either the owner or charterer of the vessel, on board of which it is shipped, he does not depend for the profits of the voyage, upon the price he may obtain for the salt in this country; but frequently ships it, because no other outward cargo can be procured; and is satisfied if he receives a very trifling advance upon it: but, it is upon the return cargo, that he calculates to secure to himself those profits.

Besides those regular trading vessels, there are many others arrive at the Port of Halifax from Great Britain, during the course of the fishing seasons; which, either come consigned to merchants resident in that port, to procure cargoes of timber, and other productions of the colony, at some other ports in the Province; or if consigned to persons resident elsewhere, call at Halifax, to receive orders where such cargoes are to be taken in; or for other purposes. Through this channel also, the merchants here, have it in their power, with the greatest facility and convenience, to obtain such supplies of salt as they may from time to time require. If it were not for this article, for which our fisheries afford such extensive demand and consumption, many of these vessels would come out in ballast. According to the present course of trade, it is frequently more for the interest of the merchant in Halifax, to take salt in payment for the return cargo which he is to furnish; than to receive it in bills of exchange, or in any other mode. The salt, he in general obtains at a low rate, and commonly, is enabled to dispose of it with readiness, and at a very handsome advance, to the fishermen, who resort to the port of Halifax, from different parts of the coasts of the Province, and from other places to obtain their supplies of the article: thus, making a profit both upon the cargo he furnishes, and what he obtains in payment for it.

In the port of Pictou, even greater facilities exist

for obtaining this article in the greatest abundance, and at the lowest prices. The great number of vessels, which every year arrive in that port from Great Britain, for cargoes of timber, (many of which too, are from that part of it, where the salt is procured) puts it in the power of the merchant in that port, to procure almost monthly, from the spring of the year until late in the autumn, whatever quantity of it he may desire to have. Many of those cargoes of timber, either the merchants here for themselves, or their agents for them in Great Britain, have contracted to furnish, several months previous to the freighting, or ordering out of any vessels to receive them: and when so contracting, they have it in their power, to stipulate for receiving by those vessels the supplies of salt they may require. Frequently, indeed, those cargoes are by express stipulation between the parties to be paid for in this article.

Great numbers of fishermen resort to the port of Pictou also, from adjacent parts of the coast of this Province; and even from the Islands of Prince Edward and Cape Breton, to procure their supplies of salt; and for the reasons which have just been stated, as applying to the merchants of Halifax in respect to this subject, it is also, much for the interest and convenience of those resident in the port of which we are speaking, to take this article in payment for the timber they furnish. The risk, attending the taking of bills of exchange for those cargoes, from their having been so frequently returned under protest, and they to whom they were given eventually left without any payment whatever, in consequence of intervening bankruptcies, or other causes, together, with a consideration of the discount, which is in general required in disposing of them here, induce many, and especially those, who are not possessed of extensive capitals, and have not long been engaged in this trade, to prefer taking in payment, salt and other commodities.

Many vessels also arrive in the last mentioned port

seeking for cargoes. Some of these, bring out salt with which to procure them; this being an article, which the shippers of it obtain so low, that they can almost invariably exchange it for the cargoes they require, so as to make the voyage a more profitable one, than if they had sent out the vessels in ballest; which otherwise they must have done.

Under all those circumstances, and with all the facilties, which exist for procuring regular and adequate supplies of this article, can it be possible, that, there is any necessity for allowing a bounty to induce its importation? According to the mode of reasoning made use of by some, in support of this measure, the same necessity might be found, for bestowing one, to favour the introduction of many articles of British and West India produce and manufacture, with which we are amply supplied, and on which duties are actually existing.

The truth is—that in general, the demand for any article, regulates the quantity of it in the market; and this again, fixes, and determines its price. If the demand is extensive, and there are no obstacles or restrictions in the way of its introduction, but it can with facility and readiness be obtained, in all countries where trade is understood, and prosecuted to any considerable extent, a sufficient supply of it will flow in as a matter of course. Traders, are not in general so blind to their own interests, nor so deficient in industry and enterprise, as to overlook or neglect any channel of trade in their power, through which their gain may be increased. If on the other hand, the demand for any article is very limited, with equal facilities and advantages for procuring it, the supply will in general be in proportion; and such as will allow a profit to the person engaged in [illegible] it into the country and vending it.

[illegible] endeavour by premiums or bounties, to procure

the importation of a greater quantity of any article, than the demand for consumption requires, must undoubtedly be considered a squandering of the revenues of the country; and seldom fails in the end, to injure the interests even of the individuals engaged in bringing such superfluous quantity into the market. Not only so, but it almost invariably occasions at some succeeding period, a corresponding scarcity of the article; and consequently a rise in its price.

These, observations, are only meant to apply, to articles which are imported into a country for its own consumption. The same regular proportions as to demand and supply, cannot always be kept up, with respect to those which are brought in, not only for that purpose but also for exportation; and which are made the objects of barter, or commercial speculations with the people of other countries. The continual fluctuations of trade, and the frequent alterations in the channels through which it is pursued, almost of necessity, produce fluctuations also, in the price of such articles in the market at home.

But few cases can be imagined, in which there would be a necessity for granting a bounty, to favour the importation of such articles, if a trade to the country where they were to be procured, was open or permitted. It is not however designed by a bounty on salt, to induce the introduction of any quantity of it, for the purpose of exportation, and barter for other commodities in foreign markets; but merely to procure a sufficient quantity for our own consumption.

In addition to the other circumstances which have been mentioned, as favorable to our obtaining at all times adequate supplies of it, for the last mentioned purpose, we must recollect—that, it is in the parent country,

that the fine salt is manufactured, (of which kind we require the greatest portion) and that both descriptions of the article, come to us free of any duty whatever.

But, we are not at this time left to form an opinion, as to the propriety, or impropriety of allowing such a bounty, merely upon theory and general reasoning. Facts, and experience, have proved beyond all reasonable doubt, the inutility and inefficacy of the measure, for the purposes it was professedly designed to accomplish. Upwards of twelve years have now elapsed, since bounties upon this article were first allowed in this Province; during certain periods of which time, and in particular for the three last years, none have existed; and it will be found upon inquiry, that salt has been as abundant and as cheap during those periods, as when the bounties were in operation. This, must be, and indeed is admitted, even by the advocates for granting them: but they contend, that, this has been owing, to the full expectations which they say were entertained, by the importers or shippers of the article, at the particular periods of giving orders for its introduction, that the bounties would be allowed. If, they had been granted for any considerable period of time together, and there was every reason to conclude, that they would be continued, and contrary to such expectations, they were suddenly withdrawn, this might have been partially the case, for the year immediately following such cessation: but when it is recollected, that the bounties have always been limited in their duration, to but one year; and that three years in succession have now elapsed, in which none have existed, that reason cannot hold good.

In another view which may be taken of the subject, the weakness and inefficacy of the bounties which have heretofore been granted, in respect to bringing a greater quantity of this article into the country, than would otherwise come into it, will further appear. It is an ar-

ticle so very subject to waste; and of which a quantity amounting in value to but a moderate sum, occupies so much room, that not only the bounties which have yet been allowed, but even much greater, could be no inducement to any person, to introduce a greater quantity of it into the market, than he would otherwise bring in.

To these considerations, must also be added—that, by increasing the quantity brought in, the price would as a matter of course be reduced; and the expense of keeping such an article on hand for any length of time, being great, a speedy sale would in most cases, as a matter of prudence, if not of necessity be resorted to; even at a loss far exceeding the amount of the bounty received.

As it is conceived, that it has now been sufficiently made to appear, that these bounties, would never have the effect of bringing a greater quantity of the article into the country, than would otherwise come in, it may next be shown, that they have not tended in the least degree, to stimulate and encourage the fisheries; and generally speaking, have not been of the slightest benefit to the fisherman. In order to elucidate this part of the subject, it is necessary, briefly to mention the principal regulations respecting a sale of the article, after its introduction into the country, which were required to be observed, in order to obtain the bounties which were formerly allowed. They were these;—that, such sale should take place, after a few days public notice thereof —that it should be by public auction—and before the article was taken out of the vessel in which it was imported. Now, the chief importations of it, have ever been in those seasons, when the fishermen were most busily engaged in the pursuit of their calling; and consequently but very few of them, have been in the port, into which any such importation was made, at the time of any such sale. It has been usual therefore, and

indeed almost the universal practice—for the importer to procure some friend, or acquaintance, to purchase in for him at such a sale, the whole quantity of the article, at just such a rate, as would entitle him to draw the whole of the bounty allowed. Several instances of this kind of proceeding have occurred, both in the port of Halifax, and in that of Pictou, (into which ports as has already been stated, the chief importations of the article are made): but particularly in the latter place, has the practice prevailed. Some of those instances, are very generally known; and have been publicly pointed out, without any attempt being made at their denial. There is indeed good reason to believe, that, there has been a very general understanding among the importers of this article, not to interfere with each other at such sales, in such a manner, that the bounty could not be obtained.

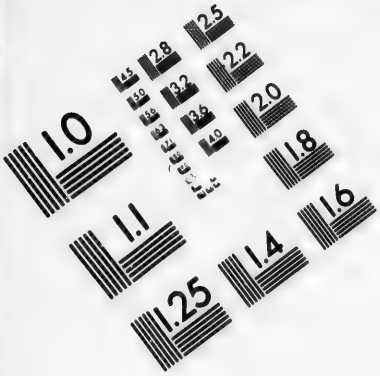
After such purchasing in, so as to make sure of the bounty, the owner or importer, was at liberty to sell out the article to the fishermen, at such prices as he could procure for it: which, always, of course, depended upon the quantity of it in the market. It has often been known—that, within a very few days after such purchasing in, large quantities of the very article, have been sold to the fisherman, by the importer, for a price more than one half beyond that, which was fixed as the one, under which alone, if the article was disposed of at such public sale, the bounty would be allowed; and generally, indeed, has the whole quantity, been sold to the same description of persons, for prices much above the one so established.

Even, of the few fishermen who happened to be in the port, where any such sale was taking place; many of them had not money at hand, to procure through that channel, their supply of the article for the season; but were under the necessity, of procuring it upon credit, and consequently at a higher price, from the merchant with whom they usually traded.

It surely was not the intention of the legislature, at the time of allowing the bounties upon this article, that, they should be received upon such as should be purchased in, in the manner which has been stated. It is probable, that then, it was not even in its contemplation, that such a practice would be pursued. The effects intended to be produced by them, clearly enough appear, from the Act under which they were allowed. It was intended—that the fisherman should be thereby enabled, to procure this article, so essential in his occupation, in sufficient quantities; and at a lower price, than he would otherwise have to give for it—and, that, the owner, or importer of it for sale, should be secured in such a price for it, upon a fair and absolute sale, as would shield him from a loss. Towards accomplishing the two first mentioned purposes, the measure is well known to have been altogether unavailing; and for the latter, most undoubtedly, it was not at all requisite.

So much has been said, respecting the bounties upon this article in particular, because they are those, which have been the most strenuously urged and recommended, by a great number of those among us who are engaged in commercial pursuits; and by all without exception, who are in the habit of importing it. These latter, having reaped the whole profit of the measure, we need not be surprised, at their vexation and regrets upon its being relinquished; nor at their zealous and persevering exertions to procure its revival.

If, a bounty upon this article could be granted in such a manner, that, the fisherman would certainly obtain it, at a price, lower by the amount of the bounty, than he would have to give for it without one; it certainly would often be proper, and at all times beneficial to allow it. This, however, it would be difficult, and indeed almost impossible to accomplish.



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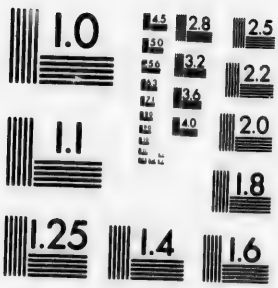

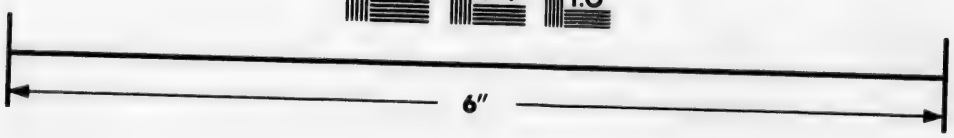

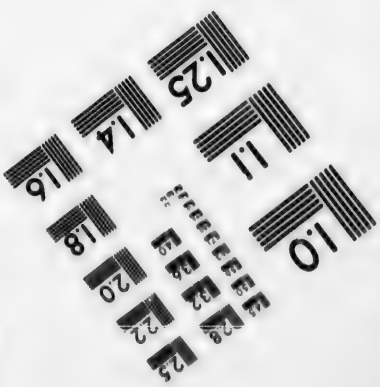

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For the purpose of stimulating, and extending the pursuit of any trade or occupation, direct bounties, are for many reasons far preferable to indirect ones. The gain, or advantage to be received from the former, is at once seen and understood; and in order to swell its amount, the porson engaged in such trade or occupation, has only to increase his exertions; but the profit to be derived from those of the latter description, being remote and often contingent; and their operation frequently not being comprehended, or perceived, by inferior or even ordinary capacities, they fail of producing the stimulus they were designed to effect.

If, therefore, there is an absolute necessity at present, for affording public assistance to our fisheries; and this can only be done by means of bounties; (which however is far from being admitted to be the case) those bounties, would be more equitably and beneficially bestowed, either upon the tonnage of the vessels employed in prosecuting the fisheries, or upon the fish itself, than in any other manner which has yet been proposed. By the first mode—a more extensive prosecution of them would take place, whereby a greater quantity of the article would be obtained; and each of them, would stimulate industry, and encourage perseverance. Even, if they were productive of no other good effects, being given directly to the persons pursuing the occupation, they would at least contribute towards making up for an unsuccessful voyage, or an improfitable sale of the article.

It is not so likely, either, that deceits, and impositions in obtaining the bounty, would be practised under those modes to the extent that they were, and doubtless again would be, under the one which has been so fully treated of. The persons, who would receive it under either of those, are not in general so capable of forming schemes and devices for accomplishing such impositions, as they are, who obtained it under the other mode; the

habits of whose calling, enable them to acquire the utmost dexterity, in evading or rendering ineffectual legislative regulations.

There is no mode, however, by which our fisheries can be so certainly, so effectually, and permanently stimulated and assisted as by advancing the Agriculture of the country. It is by no means too much to affirm—that, so long as this remains in the feeble and neglected state, in which it has ever yet been, all the bounties which can be given to the fisheries, will never afford them any serious or permanent benefit.

Agriculture, has in truth, a more extensive influence upon every occupation in society, with regard to its profitable pursuit, than many are apt to imagine; and than some, would be willing to allow. It is upon the productions of the ground, that all trades and occupations in civilized society, chiefly depend for subsistence. According, therefore, to the abundance or the scarcity of these; but particularly of corn, so will nearly every calling and employment in life, either prosper, or languish; and consequently, so will the whole society, be either wealthy and independant, or poor and embarrassed.

From a number of causes which might be mentioned, bread, is more extensively used, by those among the fishermen who can at all afford to purchase it, than almost any other article of subsistence. Greater proportions of it, indeed, are consumed by them, than by most other classes of persons. It follows therefore, of necessity, that the price of this article must have a very powerful effect, with regard to their general success in their calling: and when we come to reflect, upon the prices our fishermen have hitherto had to pay for it, we shall not be supprised, that, they are in general so indigent and embarrassed in their circumstances.

By far the greater part of the population of this Province, has always been dependant upon some other country for bread; and particularly for a great number of years past, upon the United States of America. This, in an especial manner, has been the case, with those among us engaged in the fisheries. For many years past, but particularly during the existence of those restrictions and prohibitions, which the government of those States thought fit to impose, with respect to any commercial intercourse between them, and Great-Britain and her Colonies, and during the late war with that country, the prices of flour in this Province, were extravagantly high; and indeed quite out of proportion with those of most other articles. During those periods, the price of a barrel of wheaten flour, sold by a trader in any of the fishing ports, or settlements, to a fisherman, may be averaged at sixteen dollars. Throughout some seasons, it is well known to have been as much as one fourth more; but the average mentioned, may be considered as a fair one.

The chief, and indeed almost the whole importations of flour into the Province, which could benefit the fishermen, have been made into the Port of Halifax; from whence the traders in the different fishing settlements along our coasts, received from time to time, such supplies of the article as they required. From these traders, the fishermen, except those immediately in the vicinity of that port, were obliged to procure their flour: which, thus, came to them at a higher rate, than to most other descriptions of persons.

The prices also of meat, and of those articles which are considered as succedaneums for bread, were generally during those periods, and indeed until within less than two years past, correspondently high. This, indeed, with respect to the latter description of articles, followed as a matter of course: for although, the position which

has been so frequently, and so ably laid down—that the price of corn is the standard by which that of every thing else is fixed and regulated; should not be admitted to its full extent; yet, its price does undoubtedly regulate that of every article, which is used as a succedaneum for it.

Added to other embarrassments, under which the fisherman laboured—the supply of bread, and of other articles of subsistence, having from the circumstances mentioned, been precarious and uncertain, he has always been under the necessity of endeavouring to procure them in part, from such limited exertions as he had in his power to make in Agricultural occupations. Thus, having been obliged to divide his attention, between too pursuits, dissimilar in their natures, and which it is for the interest of both should be exclusively pursued by different individuals, he has failed of improving his circumstances by either.

From all these considerations, it may appear, how much more effectually, our fisheries could be stimulated and extended, and the situation of those engaged in their prosecution improved, by encouraging and promoting our Agriculture than by the allowance of public bounties. The advantage of this mode of encouraging them, may indeed be shown at once, in the form of arithmetical calculation; and so as to be plainly perceived, and understood, by the most ordinary capacity. Suppose for example,—a fisherman and his family to consume in the course of a year, but three barrels of flour, (which certainly is not a very large portion); if he could procure these, at the rate of eight dollars per barrel, instead of the average price of sixteen, which has been mentioned, here, would be a saving at once of six pounds; which, is within five shillings of the amount of the bounty, he is at present entitled to receive, upon one hundred quintals of fish.

If our Agriculture was so far advanced, that from it a sufficient portion of bread could be furnished, for the consumption of our whole population, (which must take place before the prosperity of the Province can be said to be placed on a firm and durable foundation) there is every reason to presume, that the price of a barrel of flour would not be greater than the lower one which has just been mentioned. In one of our most populous districts, and where, from a number of causes, Agricultural pursuits have not arrived even at the state of improvement in which they are found in some other parts of the Province, in years of ordinary abundance, good wheaten flour, could be purchased by the hundred weight, as low as at that rate.

By encouraging the fisheries in this mode, a greater portion of productive labour would also be put in motion, and kept constantly in exercise; and a saving to our public funds would be effected, to the amount of those large sums, which have almost annually, for a length of time past, been bestowed as bounties. Those sums, having been derived from duties upon articles of general consumption, may be considered, as having been accumulated from taxes upon the whole body of our population. If, the necessity for raising them was superseded, the whole society would be so far relieved from a burthen; or if those duties should still be continued to their full extent; the sums so allowed heretofore, could be applied to many other purposes, which would contribute to the advancement of our general prosperity.

It is now time to enter upon a full and particular consideration, of the most important of all the subjects, proposed to be discussed in these pages. The greater part of what has yet been advanced, has been merely a specification of the causes, which have hitherto prevented our rising to a wealthy or flourishing condition. He who wishes well to a country, performs but part of his

duty, and that too, the most invidious and unpleasant, by pointing out the errors and defects with which it is chargeable. If, he would wish to escape the accusation, of being querulous or malevolent, he must proceed still further, and endeavour to find remedies for the evils existing; and explain how a state of prosperity may be attained.

It may safely be affirmed, that, with us, such a state can only be reached, through a diligent and assiduous attention to our Agricultural interest. To this important subject, surely, none who are sincerely desirous of the welfare of the Colony can feel for a moment indifferent.

Upon taking an extended and unprejudiced view, of the different sources on which the wealth and general prosperity of this Province must depend, it will appear —that, as there is none which is of such vital importance as our Agriculture; so there is none, which has until very lately been so greatly neglected. For this, a number of causes may be assigned, which will presently be treated of. In the mean time it may be observed, that the pursuit of it, was too long and too generally considered of minor consequence towards promoting our general welfare; and indeed, that it appeared to have been looked upon by many among us, as an occupation of rather an inferior, and degrading description.

If viewed however in a proper light, it must be confessed, that there is no employment in life, which is more truly honorable, and which tends more directly, to ensure the just independence, the comfort, and the happiness of man. It was the express appointment of his Creator, that he should procure the means of his subsistence, by the cultivation of the ground from which his body was taken. The earth was not appointed to yield

him this subsistence, without any exertions on his part; on the contrary, he was commanded to seek it by the sweat of his brow, by his own bodily labours. In this injunction, the truly pious and enlightened, reflecting upon the many fatal passions, vices, and follies, to the power of which mankind are exposed, will recognize the dispensation of an all-wise, and a merciful Providence.

In the most enlightened ages of the world, and in many of the most mighty and celebrated States that ever flourished, Agriculture has been esteemed the most honorable and laudable of occupations. Both in ancient and modern times, the wisest and most illustrious characters, have not only employed their talents in studies for its improvement, but have not been ashamed, personally, and actively to engage in its pursuit.

There is, also, no occupation, which so powerfully leads to independence in every respect. The husbandman in the cultivation of his fields, seeks the means of subsistence immediately from the bounty, and never failing goodness of his Creator. However poor, and even destitute he may be, at the commencement of his labours, yet when not unjustly coerced, and oppressed by his fellow men, seldom does he fail by the exercise of temperance, industry, and prudence to procure in the course of a few seasons, an ample supply for all his absolute wants. He is not required, as those in many other occupations in life almost of necessity are, to flatter, to gloss over, or to palliate, the vices, and follies of mankind, to minister directly to their vanities, to crouch beneath their arbitrary dictates, or to submit to their whims and caprices. Under a free and equitable government, secured in the enjoyment of his possessions, the habits of his calling, tend not more to invigorate and preserve the health of his body, than to nourish and enlarge the freedom and independence of his mind, and to foster the best feelings and affections of his heart.

Whatever may be the fluctuations or changes, in all other occupations in society, or in political relations; and however extensive may be the distress thereby introduced, he need not look beyond his own fields for the absolute necessaries of life. As far as respects himself, and his own domestic circle, his sources of satisfaction and enjoyment will continue the same.

His occupation, also, tends much less than any other, to engender and nourish those harrassing anxieties, perplexities, and cares, which sadden and embitter so many of the scenes of this state of existence. Having done his part for procuring the means of support, he looks immediately to his Creator, for his reward in their regular and adequate supply, and is not left subject to those frauds, those impositions, and that injustice, which are so greatly dreaded in most other occupations; and through which, such numbers have been suddenly reduced from a state of the greatest affluence and abundance, to the extremes of misery, and dependence.

There is, also, no foundation, on which the real wealth, the independence, and the happiness of nations, can so effectually be raised, and can so securely and permanently repose as upon Agriculture. This, indeed, follows as a matter of course, if what has just been advanced with respect to individuals pursuing that occupation, be correct and well founded. The welfare of a State, if rightly considered, will ever be found to depend upon that of the members composing it. If these, considered apart, enjoy abundance and happiness, the state they compose, may very fairly be denominated, wealthy, and prosperous. On the other hand, with what propriety can that country be said to be truly independent, and flourishing, the individuals of which, depend upon a foreign quarter for the first necessaries of life, are oppressed with want, embarrassed, and unhappy.

All foundations, indeed, but this, for national prosperity, are insecure and precarious Commerce, which in modern times, is made rather too much the business of nations, and which it would appear, is considered by great numbers, as the only occupation worthy of pursuit, is constantly exposed to fluctuations and vicissitudes. It follows therefore, of course, that the country which is chiefly dependant for its prosperity, upon this source, can never be justly considered, as in a state of real, and solid security. A change in political relations, restrictions imposed upon trade, or the events of a war, will suddenly reduce such a country, from a state of power, abundance, and rejoicing, to one of general weakness, distress, and despondency.

On the other hand, a nation in which Agriculture is so extensively pursued, as to afford all the absolute means of subsistence to the individuals belonging to it, is not exposed to those evils; but if cut off from all foreign intercourse, may still remain prosperous and happy. It is scarcely, indeed, too much to affirm—that no country was ever yet for any great length of time, invariably and eminently prosperous, in which Agricultural pursuits were despised or neglected.

This, may be exemplified, and proved, by the histories of a number of nations, and countries, both in ancient and modern times. Among the Romans, that ambitious and arbitrary people, who were almost constantly engaged in the most formidable, and sanguinary wars, those pursuits, were from the first period of their story, held in high estimation; and their most celebrated characters, were often found actively employed in advancing them. Their improvements in Agriculture, kept pace with their conquests; and wherever they established their dominion, they caused the labours of the field, immediately to flourish. To this cause, as much as to the dread of their arms, or the nature of the government they

established, may be ascribed, the acquiescence under their dominion, of the countries they subjugated, and the long continued preservation of the conquests they made. It was not until late in the decline of the mighty empire they established, that the mother of so many nations, was herself made to depend upon remote parts of her territories, for the first necessary of life; and that she sometimes underwent, even the horrors of famine. The neglect of this most important of all occupations, may be considered as rapidly accelerating the downfal of that mighty and close cemented fabric, which the wisdom, and the labours of so many generations had been occupied in rearing.

Even Carthage, which was extensively busied in commerce, and which carried its pursuits, to a greater point of perfection, than any other country of her time, bestowed upon Agriculture, particular and assiduous attention. It is recorded, that in the destruction of that city by its exasperated and merciless rival, when every monument of its art, every other record, or memorial of its science, were diligently sought after, and destroyed, the valuable works it possessed upon Agriculture, were carefully preserved by that rival; who assiduously employed, the rich store of information they contained, to advance its own knowledge of that honorable occupation.

In the history of many modern nations, also, we may trace the important consequences, of a careful attention to extend and improve it. In Great-Britain, this occupation has for many ages past, been held in very high estimation; and has at this time arrived at a state of perfection, which probably was never surpassed. If, it had not been, for an extensive, and unremitted application to its pursuit, how deplorable would often have been the situation of that country! In those periods of its history when assailed by the most formidable combinations of foes, and when its commerce was exclu-

ded from almost every part of the continent of Europe, if it had not possessed within itself the chief means of subsistence to a sufficient extent, all the extremes of distress would have ensued to its people, and the bulwark of freedom must have fallen. Through its attention to Agriculture, even more than through its commerce, was that magnanimous country enabled to support those mighty fleets, and armies, which lately were engaged in preserving its own independence, and in redressing the wrongs, and restoring the freedom of so many other nations.

It may also very fairly be concluded, that the power and the greatness of France, have always been principally owing to its extensive cultivation and pursuit of the different branches of husbandry. Even, under the most arbitrary and oppressive systems of government, heavily burthened with taxes at one period, and its commerce driven from the ocean at another, through its attention to these, that country has almost constantly kept its vast population, sufficiently supplied with all the chief necessaries of life.

We may now take a view of what has been, and still is, the situation of some other countries, in which Agriculture has been neglected; or from causes which will be mentioned has been but partially pursued. In Spain, although many parts of it are highly favoured by nature, extreme inattention to the tillage of the ground for procuring the absolute means of subsistence, has prevailed for a great length of time past; and the great improvements therein, which in modern times have been made, are there but little understood. Hence, it is notorious, that the peasantry, and the lower orders of people in that country, are in a more impoverished condition; and even more deficient in intellectual improvement, than those of most other countries in Europe.—Possessing the most extensive mines of gold and silver,

and oft en prosecuting commerce to a very great extent, yet, as a nation, it has still continued poor, and embarrassed. It affords, indeed, a striking example, that neither by the possession of those precious metals, nor by the state of advancement in commercial pursuits, is real national wealth to be estimated. This must always entirely depend upon agricultural improvements.

The colonies in the West Indies, afford another instance of the unhappy and dependant state of a country, in which Agriculture is not pursued to such an extent, as to furnish the chief means of subsistence to its inhabitants. Although, those colonies possess such extensive sources of wealth, and supply a great portion of the civilized world, with such a variety of comforts and luxuries; and though such numbers there, riot in affluence, and dazzle with their splendour and magnificence, yet they have almost constantly been making complaints, and doubtless not without reason, of their not being sufficiently supplied with some of the chief necessaries of life; and have even at certain periods, experienced some of the horrors of want. It is well known, that, they have always been greatly dependant upon other countries for those necessaries, and in particular for bread.

By reason thereof, they have ever been exposed to all the consequences of fluctuations in trade. Through a change in political relations, restraints, or interdictions imposed upon commerce, or alterations in its channels, preventing them from obtaining regular and ample supplies of those necessaries, or from the concurrence of causes, through which the prices of their productions have been lowered in the markets to which they were supplied, they have often been reduced within a short compass of time, from a state of abundance, and prosperity, to one of real distress, and despondency. A country in this situation, can never be said, to be truly wealthy; or to have its prosperity resting upon a solid and

permanent basis. So frequent, and so extensive, were the distresses and embarrassments they formerly experienced, and so fully sensible did they become of the true cause of them, that, they have at length as is well known resorted to the expedient, of appropriating greater portions of their lands than they had previously done, to the raising and procuring of those articles of food, the most essentially requisite. In consequence of this, they have latterly, in a great measure, prevented the recurrence of those evils.

The Colony of Newfoundland, has ever been much in the same precarious and unhappy condition. If not from natural, from many other causes which might be mentioned, it has ever been almost wholly dependant upon other countries for all the means of subsistence with the exception of the one article which is there procured in such abundance. Having required those means from foreign quarters, even more than the West Indies, its situation, has accordingly, been in general more embarrassed and unhappy than theirs. It is true, this colony has afforded an extensive source of wealth, and been of extreme importance to Great-Britain in many respects; and some within it, engaged in commercial pursuits, have acquired much wealth; but its inhabitants in general, are indigent, and embarrassed. Scarcely a season elapses in one period or other, of which they do not experience extreme hardships, and privations, from the want of some of the chief necessaries of life. The prices of these, have in general, been so enormous, that they have prevented the great bulk of those engaged in the pursuits there carried on, from improving their circumstances.

The almost constant changes and vicissitudes in the commercial world, have ever operated more immediately upon the state of this Colony, than upon any other, which has chiefly been owing, to the state of dependence

just mentioned, in which it has constantly stood. Those changes, it is true, in their direct operation, have most frequently been unfavorable to its prosperity; but it will be found upon proper investigation, that the numerous failures in trade, and the extreme distresses and embarrassments which have there been experienced, within some years past, as well as the general declining state, in which that colony may be considered as having latterly been, have proceeded, more from the difficulties under which it laboured, with respect to procuring the means of subsistence and the other articles indispensibly required for its use, and from the extravagant prices, which from necessity were paid for them, than from all other causes.

It is surely unnecessary, to adduce any more instances, to show the ill consequences which a country must experience, from neglecting agricultural occupations, or from its not being adapted to their pursuit. Volumes have been written, and many more might be added, to prove, that, they only can confer, real wealth, and that upon them, the true and permanent prosperity and happiness of nations, almost wholly depend.

It will appear, even upon a brief examination of the subject, that a variety of causes have concurred to retard the progress of Agricultural improvements in this Province. Some of these, it is of importance to investigate, and clearly to understand, before entering upon a course of explaining, how that interest may be made to advance and to flourish.

If we would wish to judge rightly of human actions, we should endeavour to ascertain the true motives whence the proceed, and in so doing, should in all cases, but particularly in those which relate to ourselves, deal

with candour, and without any fear of allowing to those motives the degree of influence they really possess. He, who looks merely at the surface of things, will always remain deficient in that knowledge which is of the most truly valuable description—the knowledge of himself, and of his fellow creatures. It often becomes necessary for the politician, and man of business, as well as the philosopher, to look closely into the dispositions of the human mind; and attentively to consider of the circumstances tending to give these any particular direction.

It will be found then upon proper investigation, that, one of the chief causes which have operated to retard the agricultural improvement of this Province, has been—the extreme prevalence of commercial pursuits. These, for a great length of time, held forth such numerous advantages, and such prospects of the speedy acquisition of gain, that, numbers of persons from the agricultural class, as well as from almost every other, rushed into them with the utmost avidity. A still greater number from the most laborious orders, were necessarily drawn to assist in one way or another in their prosecution. The great prevalence of those pursuits, was spoken of in a former part of these observations; and what has there been advanced, may be referred to, towards proving the position just mentioned.

It will also be found that, by far the greater number, indeed, nearly all of those in the middling, or in what are called the better classes of society, who have come into the country during a length of time past, came for purposes of trade; and have been engaged in its prosecution. Nearly all of those, who have hitherto come here from other countries, for the purpose of engaging in Agriculture, have been extremely indigent; and in general were but very little skilled in that occupation. Their know ledge of it indeed, it may here be

remarked, has not since been materially improved; the causes of which will presently be explained.

Of those, who came here as mentioned to prosecute trade, but very few have contributed their exertions, or done any thing whatever directly for the advancement of our Agriculture. It would appear from their conduct, as though they considered themselves while here, in a state of exile or banishment. They have in general, seemed to care very little about the prosperity of the Province; but have merely attended to the advancement of the particular pursuits in which they were engaged; and more especially to the acquisition of individual gain. For acquiring this, they have indeed been sufficiently attentive to employ all the means within their power; and from time to time as they obtained it, have been full as careful, to hasten it away to some other country. Thither, after securing the amount, which probably they had limited themselves here to acquire, they have speedily followed, to consume or enjoy it.

What numbers might been named, who have acted in this manner, and who having amassed large fortunes within the Colony, have quitted it, with the declared intention of never returning. These persons, may say in their justification, if any justification is deemed requisite—that by such conduct, they have not committed any violation of the amor patriæ, for that, they never professed or entertained any attachment to this country, any farther than their own interest was concerned. It may surely then on the other hand be remarked—that they were not the persons who while here, were entitled to the first degree of consideration and attention.

If instead of thus quitting the Province, they had removed from the capital, to other parts of it, and had been satisfied, to enjoy the tranquility, the moderation,

and happiness of a rural life, and to endeavour by their example, and influence, to improve and to forward our Agriculture; they would have effected more for the promotion of our general prosperity, than could have been accomplished by all other means. If they had gone still further, and loaned out their money judiciously to the farmers around them, who might have required it; or had employed it immediately themselves, in making Agricultural improvements, they would have contributed yet more to the public welfare; and through these means alone, the Province would long ere this, have been in a highly prosperous state; and quite independent of every other country for most of the chief necessaries of life. The exertions, and the example of those persons, in forwarding the Agricultural occupations in which they themselves were engaged, would have aroused, and stimulated those of inferior means and information around them; and the general extension and improvement of those occupations would have followed of course.

Having, however, from the first, been determined on quitting the country, as soon as they had acquired the limited portions of wealth, it was not to be expected, that they would have placed it out upon interest here: or have suffered any part of it which they could possibly bear away, to remain here after their departure.—The sole object of most of them, was, to drain the vitals of the colony as effectually as they could, to aggrandize and enrich themselves; and they have but too extensively, and too wofully for us, succeeded in doing it.

Even, many of those in the capital, who have grown rich by their pursuits, and are satisfied to remain in the Province, continue in the same place, either lavishing away their wealth in rounds of folly and dissipation, or having placed it in the British funds, or in those even of the United States, seem to care very little about the ad-

vancement of our general welfare. A few of such persons, it is true, being of active dispositions, possess small fields about the capital; the cultivation of which, they appear to pursue chiefly for recreation and amusement; and about which, they are satisfied to expend as much money and labour, as would suffice for making and even highly improving extensive farms in many parts of the country. Whether such an expenditure of their money is judicious and prudent, or not, is undoubtedly a matter entirely for their own consideration; but in treating of the public welfare, it is allowable to remark, how much more effectually this would be promoted, by the employment of the sums thus expended, in the cultivation of farms in the country, and by the residence of those persons upon them, recommending by their example, industry and temperance to all who were around them.

To such as are but moderately acquainted with human nature, and the power of habit it will not however be matter of surprize, that most of those who have acquired wealth by their pursuits in the capital have ever preferred from inclination alone a residence there to a life in the country. Courses of dissipation, of vanity, and of frivolous amusements, such as some of them long and closely pursued, naturally engender a distaste and aversion to all rural occupations, and to the calmness and moderation of virtuous retirement.

It may further be remarked, that the extensive prosecution of commercial pursuits in this Province, has not merely been injurious to our Agriculture, by reason of such great numbers of person having been directly engaged in conducting them; but has been even still more so, by engrossing a great portion of the most valuable labour of the country, in providing the means for their prosecution, or otherwise assisting them forward. In the greater part of the eastern quarter of the Province, the extensive trade in timber, has for a length of time

past employed the attention and labour of almost all descriptions of persons. The prospects of speedy gain, which it held forth for some years, induced many, as well from the Agricultural class, as from nearly every other, to abandon the occupations which before they had been engaged in pursuing, and to employ themselves as traders,and exporters of the article. Numbers of others, were employed at all seasons of the year, either in manufacturing the article, in carrying it to market, or in assisting in its shipment.

So general has been, and still continues to be, the attention to that trade, in that part of the Province, that, even among the farmers in many extensive settlements, there are but very few indeed, who are not employed about it in one way or other. This description of persons, even in the most precious seasons of the year, while they should be employed in bearing manure to their exhausted fields, ploughing and preparing them for the seed, depositing it in the earth, or in other Agricultural labours, are anxiously watching the rising of a river, or are busied in conveying their timber to the places where they had agreed to deliver it to the traders.

Being engaged in this way, many of them have not time to prepare their ground in a proper manner for the reception of the seed, even if they were perfectly skilled so to do, but are obliged to hurry it in, and indeed not unfrequently, after the proper season for sowing it is over. This being accomplished, their attention is again immediately turned to their timber engagements, about which they consume the greater portion of their time between those periods,at which they are imperiously summoned to the labour of gathering in the different products of their fields. After this is wholly over, they too generally return to the same favorite, and it may be said too truly, even fatal engagements ; and neglect,and defer that preparation of the soil for the ensuing season, which then should take place.

This description is not exaggerated, or overdrawn, it is known from the personal observation of the author of these remarks to be correct, and can be verified by numbers.

With such impediments, and obstructions to its extension and improvement, and with so little attention bestowed upon it, how is it possible that Agriculture should flourish. It certainly has not in those settlements, reached that improved, and prosperous state, which might reasonably have been expected, from the very considerable population they have for many years contained.

The occupation of a farmer, is one which demands undivided, and assiduous attention, and which, particularly in young countries like this, affords him employment for every season of the year. During the winter, his attention and labour will be fully occupied,—in the care of his cattle, and the different services essentially necessary to be attended to about his barn-yard—in providing a sufficient portion of fuel for the rest of the year in preparing, and conveying to market those products of his farm which he may have to dispose of,—repairing and putting in order his implements of husbandry,—and in a variety of other engagements, to which that season is appropriate, and which should not be allowed to break in upon those more important occupations, which imperiously require to be attended to at other times of the year. If, his farm is but of recent formation, and he is desirous of extending it, by clearing any part in a wilderness state, this, is also the season, in which he should be employed in felling the wood.

At the first opening of the Spring, (which in this Province is of such short duration) his more active engagements should commence; and throughout this sea-

son, his utmost attention and industry should be kept constantly in exercise. The proper preparation of his grounds for the reception of the different descriptions of seed, and the employment of depositing them there, at the several periods at which skilful husbandry will suggest and require they should be sown, will keep him amply and busily employed, during the whole of this season. Scarcely indeed will it have passed, and that description of seed which according to a regular course of husbandry should latest be sown, have been deposited in the earth, before some of those, which were earliest put in, will require his attention and labour, to assist in bringing forward their growth.

To his engagements of that nature, very speedily succeed the labours of what may be termed the first harvest; and from that period, until the whole of those products of his fields with which he has been blessed by the kindness of Providence has been properly secured, the most active and unremitting employment is offered for his time and attention.

The period which immediately follows, also presents its appropriate, and even not less important occupations. It is then, that he should again review his fields; and exercise his skill, in assigning to each the particular mode of culture for the ensuing season, which may be best adapted to its state; and his industry, in ploughing, or doing whatever else about them, is then proper to be done, to prepare them for undergoing such future cultivation.

Nor let it be imagined, that the course just prescribed, would be merely one of anxiety and drudgery, and quite unproductive of any gratification or enjoyment. These, it would amply bestow, of the most genuine and rational description. The mind of the husbandman

pursuing such a diligent and assiduous course, would be actively employed, in collecting and storing up information, in his art; in doing which, and in the execution of the experiments he would be led to make for enlarging that information, he would not fail to experience more sincere and extensive enjoyments, than the idle and dissolute ever can know.

It may here with truth and propriety be remarked—that the general unskilfulness displayed in agricultural occupations in this Province, is more to be attributed to the attention of those engaged in them, having been greatly led off to other pursuits, than to any deficiency of means for acquiring information. Those means have always been sufficiently within the power of the greater number who might have wished to possess and employ them.

It was the inclination for improvement that chiefly was wanting. Wherever this, is fully and warmly engaged in any occupation or calling whatever, which is vigorously pursued, improvements therein almost invariably follow. Man, is ever prone to devise, and to practice expedients, for extending his accommodation, or advantage, in every pursuit in which he feels seriously interested. The state of perfection to which any art or manufacture has arrived, is merely, the result of the accumulation and assiduous employment of the discoveries and improvements of ingenious and diligent men: most of whom, have been directly engaged in the prosecution of the art, or calling, they laboured to improve.

If, we again turn our attention to the trade so extensively carried on in some of the eastern parts of the Province, and which has lately been spoken of, it may be made still more clearly to appear, how much more

advantage the farmers would have reaped, from an undivided, and steady attention to their agricultural pursuits, than from their labours in the manufacture of timber. A decisive proof of this, may indeed be afforded, by comparing the situations and circumstances of the persons in general, who were engaged in that way, and those of persons residing in the same, or contiguous settlements who were not so engaged.

It must be admitted, by those, who have had opportunities of judging for themselves on the subject, and will impartially declare their opinion,—that, of the farmers in those places where timber has been manufactured to any great extent, those few, who have confined their attention entirely to husbandry, enjoy more of the comforts, and conveniencies of life, and are also less involved in debt, than those who have been deeply engaged in manufacturing or trading in that article. However indigent, those of the former class were, at the commencement of their agricultural labours, they have in general succeeded in progressively improving their circumstances. Many of such persons, possess real, as well as personal property, to very considerable value; and can afford themselves all those comforts, which a prudent and temperate husbandman can require. Nearly all of them, indeed, have to every appearance, been enabled to raise themselves quite above want.

On the other hand, it is found, that, they who have neglected their farms, and employed themselves extensively in manufacturing and disposing of timber, have almost universally become more and more impoverished, and embarrassed. Although, in some seasons, when the price of that article was very high, they probably succeeded in effecting a temporary improvement in their circumstances, yet the prospects of ultimate gain with which doubtless they then flattered themselves have speedily passed away, and they have become more deeply involved in debt, and more indigent than ever.

The injurious effects of this trade upon our agricultural class, will also further appear, on comparing the apparent situations and circumstances of the farmers in the different settlements in that quarter of the Province, taking them in bodies. It is asserted by those who have had ample means and opportunities of obtaining the information,—that the farmers in an extensive settlement, lying immediately upon the shore of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, who generally speaking have never been engaged in manufacturing or vending timber, but who have solely attended to the cultivation of their fields, taking them in a body, are far less involved in debt, and possess property of different descriptions to a greater value, than the same class of persons in general, in any of the contiguous settlements where large quantities of timber have been made. Many in the first mentioned place, have indeed so much bettered their condition, that they not only possess abundance of all the principal means of subsistence, but even have large sums of money in their possession, or out upon interest. The settlement they compose may almost be termed the granary of that part of the Province, such large quantities of grain are there yearly produced.

But the argument in support of the superior advantages of an undivided attention to Agriculture, may be made still stronger, by carrying this rule of comparison to a yet greater extent. If we look throughout the Province, we shall almost invariably find,—that, in those settlements and places, in which that occupation has been exclusively pursued, the inhabitants enjoy greater abundance, and are in every respect more comfortable and independent in their circumstances, than in those, where they have divided their attention between that and other pursuits.

It has indeed been unfortunate, that, there has always been some occupation or branch of trade, which

held forth prospects of superior advantage, and which served to prevent attention from being seriously and extensively applied to the improvement of this only certain foundation for our prosperity. While the trade in timber which has been spoken of, operated to its prejudice in one quarter, the Plaister of Paris trade, (which is still so extensively prosecuted from almost every part of the shores of the Bay of Fundy) did the same throughout most of the settlements there; and to compleat the whole, the fisheries, which are followed by such a very great proportion of the inhabitants along nearly the whole coasts of the Province, had also the effect of obstructing its extension and improvement.

With respect to these last, it is not here intended to insinuate, that they ought to be wholly neglected, and attention and encouragement be solely bestowed upon Agricultural pursuits; or that the labour of the country should be exclusively applied to the latter. The fisheries, are undoubtedly to be considered as one of the principal sources of our prosperity, and if properly encouraged, might be made greatly to promote it; but in stating and comparing the degrees of importance of the several sources from which our general welfare is to be derived, and the means which should be employed to advance it, it is allowable to observe, that if less labour and attention had been employed in these, and more for the advancement of Agriculture, the Province at large would at this time have been in a more flourishing condition.

It may also be observed, with respect to the timber trade,—that, it has in general had a very injurious effect upon the morals of those who were extensively engaged in manufacturing the article, and who chiefly depended for their livelihood upon the traffic they carried on in it with the traders and exporters. From a number of causes which might be mentioned, it has had a

powerful tendency to lead those persons into habits of indolence, intemperance, and vice of different descriptions, or to confirm them therein, and too true it is, has actually been productive of those evils, to a very fatal extent.

On the other hand, it must undoubtedly be admitted,—that there is scarcely any occupation or employment in life, which is more adverse to the formation or nourishment of those habits than Agriculture, nor which tends more directly to promote and encourage industry and temperance, and to strenghen and improve all the moral qualities of men.

Having said so much relative to the obstacles which have hitherto been in the way of the advancement of this most important interest, it is now time to turn our attention to the means which can the most effectually be employed for their removal, or reduction, and to invigorate and extend it. Even to a person but slightly acquainted with husbandry, or who has bestowed but little reflection upon the subject, it will be obvious, that no better measure can be adopted for effecting those purposes, than the establishment of agricultural societies. It is one which has been employed with singularly good consequences in the country to which it is our happiness to belong; than which, we certainly can have no better model, for the regulation of nearly every part of our domestic economy.

It was intended by the author of these remarks, to have here endeavoured fully to set forth and illustrate the numerous advantages to be derived from the adoption of this measure, but in this be has been most ably anticipated by the scientific and patriotic writer who has recently been affording such truly valuable instruction upon the whole subject to which it relates. Through

the exertions of that writer, those societies have already been formed in nearly every county and district of the Province; and it is fondly to be hoped, and indeed may be very confidently expected, that their establishment will lead to the most happy results.

From the funds which each will establish, such premiums and bounties can be allowed, as will powerfully tend to arouse and stimulate industry, and to excite and keep in exercise a general spirit of emulation in all agricultural improvements. With regard to such premiums, it is with deference suggested, that taking into consideration the infant state of Agriculture in the greater part of this Province, and the great inequality as to improvements therein, in the condition of lands even in the same township or settlement, it would not be well to limit or confine the allowance of them so greatly, that they should be exclusively bestowed for the production of the greatest quantity of grain from a certain portion of land, without having regard to its quality, or its previous condition; for then, it would merely be always allowing them to those persons whose lands were naturally the most fertile, or had been longest improved. If it is desired to excite general emulation, it would probably be judicious and adviseable, to bestow them upon those, who considering the length of time their lands had been under improvement, and the native qualities of the soil, had exercised the greatest portion of skill in their cultivation.

The members of the Societies will be enabled in the course of each season, from their own observations and inquiries, to become acquainted with those circumstances as to all the improved lands within their several districts, and even if the expression may be permitted, to classify them accordingly; so that not only the opulent farmer, whose lands are highly fruitful by nature, and have long been carefully and properly cultivated, but also the

poor but diligent one, whose farm has been recently formed out of a wilderness, and who has had to contend with a soil naturally stubborn and unyielding, may receive the reward of superior industry and skill.

It is well known, that emulation or the desire to surpass, is one of the most powerful dispositions of the mind, and is one among the few, which when pointed to a laudable object, can never be too powerfully awakened or exercised; because, in such case, it can scarcely ever be productive of injurious effects. Even when the point in view is of very trifling importance, and cannot tend in the least to the advancement of self-interest, a very slender matter will serve to excite and bear it forward, and induce men to employ very strenuous exertions to procure its gratification. How much more strongly then should it be exercised, and how much greater exertions should be used, when the object to which they are directed, will immediately and extensively advance, not only the public, but the private interest.

It might be supposed upon first view, that persuasions in such case would scarcely be necessary, yet such are the incongruities of the human character, and such the inconsistencies in the conduct of men, that it is not merely in matters which the most highly concern their present or eternal safety and happiness, that they are prone to commit the most fatal mistakes, but with all their pretended wisdom and self-sufficiency, as to every thing relating to their wordly interest, even for the advancement of this, they frequently require to be shown what courses they ought to pursue.

Upon this subject, it is true, as upon almost every other in which the prosperity or the happiness of the public, or of individuals is concerned, there are very different opinions entertained. While some would leave

men without either admonition, or advice, as to every thing relating to self interest, to follow those courses they would chuse for themselves. Others in the pride of self wisdom or arrogance, would even employ the engines of government or arbitrary power, to prescribe and establish those, which alone they should pursue to advance it. Experience has sufficiently proved, that neither extreme can be safely adopted. The many have often yielded to the advice or the warnings of the few, and have been thereby induced to abandon pursuits in which they were rapidly involving themselves in poverty or ruin and to betake themselves to the prosecution of others, through which their prosperity and happiness have been firmly established.

Such, it is trusted, and indeed fully anticipated, will be the case among us, through the influence and exertions of the Societies of which we have been speaking. The individuals composing them, will doubtless consider it not more a duty than a pleasure, to endeavour by their advice and example to arouse emulation in others, and while they seek to advance their own skill in their occupation, afford by its assiduous exercise, the means of instruction to those of inferior information around them.

Zealous and patriotic, however, as may be the labours, and liberal as may be the contributions of the individuals of these societies, yet they must fail of affording the full degree of stimulation and encouragement, which this subject from its vital importance ought to receive. It is the Legislature of the country, which has the disposition of its funds, and the guardianship of its resources, and of every thing relating to the general welfare, that, we have a right to expect, will put a finishing hand to the good work which has been so happily begun. It is trusted, and indeed may be confidently anticipated, that, a disposition will there be found,

cordially to unite for the adoption of all such measures, as may be requisite for the complete organization, and for ensuring the duration of those societies; and that such liberal sums will be placed at their disposal, as will enable them to effect all the good they contemplate.

There surely is no subject, which has such claims upon its attention, nor about which it can be so beneficially employed. Too long, indeed, and too fatally has it been overlooked, or neglected; but a zeal, and an ardour respecting it, has at length been awakened, which surely will not less animate the Councils of the country, than the breasts of patriotic individuals.

All party views and distinctions, if any such should arise, should be wholly laid aside, for the consideration, and the advancement of an object of such primary importance, as our agricultural prosperity. It is what the country has a right to expect, at this important crisis of public feeling, and notwithstanding fair appearances, it may even be said of political apprehension, from those who are so desirous of limiting us in the means of improving the advantages we enjoy, and of ultimately obtaining their possession.

However slender or limited the public revenues at present may be, yet enough may surely be spared from them, to afford liberal encouragement to this primary source of our prosperity: and unlike the operation of many other measures, for the promotion of which large sums of money have been frequently bestowed, those which may be granted for this purpose, will very speedily be fully repaid. It is not too much to assert, that, there is no object which can be held in view, and for the promotion of which, any requisition may be made upon our resources, but what ought to be laid aside for the pre-

sent, if it would at all interfere with the allowance of such liberal sums, as will be necessary to ensure the advancement of this primary interest.

It surely is unnecessary, to attempt a specification of all the advantages, which will result from placing at the disposal of the several societies the sums so allowed. To all who have taken the trouble to reflect upon the subject, they must be sufficiently obvious. A few of them, however, may with propriety be mentioned.—Through the means thus afforded, in addition to their own funds, each of them, but particularly the one established in the capital, will be enabled to import into the country such implements of husbandry, as may be adapted to the state of improvement in the several parts of it, as well as such seed as may be suited to our climate, and the great varieties of our soil. They will, also, be thereby enabled, to extend their premiums and bounties upon production, and the exercise of superior industry and skill, and to bestow that assistance and encouragement to the emigration to the colony, of a suitable description of persons, which has long been so imperiously required.

This last, indeed, should be viewed as a subject entitled to the most serious and attentive consideration, because undoubtedly connected in the most intimate manner, with the advancement of our general welfare.—Such particular observations will presently be made upon it, as its importance deserves.

Upon further inquiry into the means by which our agriculture may be benefited, it must be obvious, that, this can very extensively and effectually be done, through the improvement of our public roads. This mode of encouragement, has long with great judgment and propriety, engaged the attention of our Legislature, and

been annually employed by it, with singular advantage, not only to this interest, but through it, to every other we possess. It is to be sure, a mode which at present has no novelty to recommend it, but its good effects have been experienced, and are well understood; and therefore it cannot be too constantly borne in mind, nor too extensively employed.

Much, however, as has been done in that way, it would have been still more judicious and advantageous, to have applied to the same purpose, a great portion of those sums from the revenues of the country, which have for many years past, been lavished upon objects undoubtedly of minor importance. The enormous aggregate amount of the sums which have been expended upon two of our public buildings, beyond what was requisite, or could be justified, considering the state and resources of the country, would alone have nearly sufficed, to place most of the roads throughout the Province in a state in which they could be travelled with comfort and dispatch. Such an application of it, would also have conduced to swell our population beyond its present amount, and have advanced the colony in general, to a state, much above that in which at present it is found.

It has been clearly evident, that in every part of the Province, as roads have been opened, or have become more improved, population has increased, and more constant and extensive communications have immediately taken place, between the villages and settlements they served to connect, and also between these and the capital. Such communications, have, indeed, within a few years past, been so greatly extended, that many articles of the growth and produce of the country, are now brought to the market in the capital, from places, from which none of the description ever before came, and with which, scarcely any intercourse by land, could until lately be had. It must, indeed, be perfectly clear,

that scarcely any greater benefit can be conferred upon the farmer, than affording him roads, over which he may with safety and convenience convey his produce to market. Without these, indeed, it is of little importance, what other advantages or encouragements are held out to his agricultural labours. If resident in the midst of an almost impenetrable wilderness, he may by his industry, procure a sufficient portion of the absolute means of subsistence for himself and his family, but in such case, he surely can have no stimulus or inducement to employ his efforts for procuring any surplus quantity.

In order still further to insure the advancement of our agricultural interest, it is requisite, and indeed should be considered as an imperious duty, that, those persons throughout the Province, who are placed in the higher, or what are called the better orders in society, and who possess influence in the communities in which they reside, as well as superior information, should employ those advantages, for the benefit of all around them in inferior situations, and who may be wanting in skill. To these, they should ever be ready and forward, to impart such advice and instruction in the art, as their own researches, or experience may enable them to give. It is, also, their duty, to employ all the means in their power, for exciting a general spirit of emulation and industry among all in their neighbourhood, and constantly to discourage, and discountenance, and strive for the suppression of all idle and intemperate habits.

Much more may be done, by the united and unremitted exertions of persons under those superior circumstances for the accomplishment of such desirable purposes, than many are apt to imagine. Example, whether good, or evil, is scarcely ever without some degree of influence and effect upon those before whom it is exhibited. It is always, too, most powerful, when displayed by those who possess superior information and means. Whate-

ver may be said with regard to reformation and amendment, it is undoubtedly true, that, it is among these, that vice and corruption, and all those evils which produce the miseries and the ruin of governments, and of countries, originate, and are carried to the greatest extent. Not only their opinions and manners, but their vices and follies, are in general, too closely imitated and pursued, by those in inferior situations within the sphere of their influence or example.

After all which may be said, as to the slender portion of skill which has heretofore been possessed and exercised throughout the Province, in agricultural pursuits, it still will be found, that, the little progress they have made, is more to be attributed to the causes which have been specified in some preceding pages, and in particular to the habits which have been described, as too generally prevailing among those engaged in this occupation, than to any deficiency of skill, or the means of acquiring it.

It is chiefly a reform in those habits that is required, in order to cause this only certain source of our wealth, and true independence to flourish. A reformation of this nature, is indeed very desirable, and might with great propriety take place, throughout most of the classes and descriptions of persons among us. Temperance, industry, and economy, invariably lead to happy results; while dissipation, indolence, and extravagance, almost always, either sooner or later, end in poverty and distress. A close attention therefore should be given to the cultivation of those estimable qualities; and they should be made the foundation of all our exertions to advance our prosperity.

The Societies which have lately been spoken of, will undoubtedly have a tendency, and it is to be hoped, will

durably operate to check and diminish the power of those mischievous habits. If not permitted to have that salutary operation and effect, there will be much danger, of their being regarded merely as novelties for a time, and afterwards continuing to effect, in but a very limited degree, those highly beneficial results, which they are so well calculated to produce.

Emulation, they will undoubtedly for some time, very powerfully excite ; but, if this is not supported and accompanied by temperate habits, and the constant cultivation of a prevailing spirit of industry, there will be much reason to apprehend, that it will undergo a decrease nearly as rapid and as universal as its rise.

It is also indispensibly requisite, in order to effect any extensive improvement in our agriculture, that those of our farmers who have hitherto permitted their attention and labour to be greatly engaged in other pursuits, should immediately consent to relinquish them ; and should give their undivided and strenuous exertions to the cultivation of their fields. This course, they may be fully assured, they will have to adopt, before they can succeed in increasing their skill in their occupation, or, indeed, in generally improving their circumstances. Numbers of such persons, it is conceived, will be able to satisfy themselves on candid reflection, that if they had adopted it in an early period of their agricultural labours, and closely adhered to it, their situations in life would at this time have been better than they actually find them to be. It would be well worth the while of such of them as do not feel fully convinced on the subject, to try for a few seasons together, how far such undivided attention to their farms, can be made to conduce to their profit. This, they certainly may do, without incurring any risk or danger whatever.

It seldom happens, that the man who busies himself in a variety of occupations, beomes a proficient in any

one of them ; or derives from the whole, any great portion of gain. Division of labour, and the separation of arts and professions,are among the principal causes of individual and national wealth. Hence, among every enlightened and industrious people, such division and separation are highly encouraged, and are constantly increasing. It need scarcely be remarked,—that, there are even many distinct occupations,which in consequence of their being divided into several branches or parts,and each of these being pursued by different individuals, are made highly profitable to all who are busied about them ; when, if any one person, had attempted to pursue the occupation throughout, he would have entirely failed of procuring even a livelihood.

Agriculture, in this Province, is yet but in its infancy, and so much is required to be done for its improvement, that none who profess to follow it for a living, can have any time to spare for other occupations. They must watch and mark the progress of the seasons, and carefully and assiduously employ the advantages they present. A' ove all, they must be attentive, to make full preparation in one season, for the approach of another. Even, though industry should be greatly increased, and sober and regular habits should universally take place,—yet it is in vain to expect, if our husbandmen in one quarter of the Province, continue to employ a great portion of their time in the manufacture of timber, or carrying it to market, and in other parts of it, in prosecuting the fisheries, or in other occupations, that our husbandry can experience that improvement which is so greatly required ; or that we can make ourselves independent of other countries for the first necessary of life. These good consequences may be wished for and talked of, experiments may be made, and even skill be increased, agricultural societies may meet, may pass resolutions, and assign premiums and rewards ; but, unless the great body of the persons who have thus been dividing their attention, adopt a different course of conduct, our situation in general will experience but little improvement.

It is necessary, that all instruction which is given, and skill which is acquired, should be diligently and assiduously applied to practice, in order to their becoming either truly valuable or useful.

In a new country like this, it is true, such a thorough division of labour, and separation of arts and professions, cannot be effected, as are found in communities which have long been established, and in which arts and manufactures are farther advanced ; but there certainly is no necessity, that the husbandman with us, should be either a manufacturer of timber, a quarrier of plaister of paris, or a fisherman. If all those who consider husbandry as their proper occupation, were to give their attention and labour solely to its pursuit, a sufficient portion of our labour would still be left, for the prosecution ofcommercial and all other employments.

We may now proceed to take a view of the subject of emigration to the colony, which must undoubtedly be considered as one of very serious importance to our agricultural interest, and indeed to every other we possess. Notwithstanding the very slender public encouragement it has hitherto received, and indeed the several circumstances which have operated to its prejudice, it has for several years past been very considerable to some parts of the Province.

It is well known, that for several years past, it has been flowing in an uncommonly extensive degree, from the old world to the new ; and in particular, from the British Empire, to different parts of North America.— It is equally well known, and must undoubtedly be matter of regret, to all who wish well to these colonies, that, by far the greater number of the persons who are thus quitting the Empire, take up their residence under the government of the United States. Even, many of them

who have landed in this Province, after remaining a short time, have directed their course to that quarter. If proper means had been employed, and the public encouragement held forth, which might so readily and extensively have been granted, most of these, would undoubtedly have been retained in the colony.

Upon a just and candid comparison, of the advantages which here are possessed, with those which really exist in the countries under the government of the United States, to which those persons are resorting, it would appear truly surprising, that they have given the preference to the latter. Not only in a political view but with respect to natural and other advantages, taking the whole of them together, this colony has a decided superiority over them.

It is true, those countries have by some been highly extolled, and the advantages they really possess, have of late been displayed in the most alluring and conspicuous light; and many have been assigned to them, which certainly are not there to be found; while, the numerous disadvantages, inconveniences, and privations, both of a natural and political description, which must be encountered or borne, under a residence there, have been as carefully kept out of sight. We must recollect, however, that, those who have indulged themselves in such extravagant praises of those countries, have either been subjects of the United States, entertaining the utmost hostility against Great-Britain, and these Colonies, or persons who have renounced their allegiance to the British government, and who bear an equal degree of animosity against it.

In opposition to those splendid, but unfaithful descriptions, may be produced the candid and ingenuous

confessions, of several who have visited those countries, of the falsity of the accounts which had been given them of the advantages they possessed, and of the sad disappointment of the hopes, and highly wrought expectations, which they had in consequence been led to entertain. To these, may also be added, the complaints to the same effect, which, notwithstanding a wish to repress them, have occasionally broke forth from some who having once taken up their residence there, were under the necessity of remaining, coupled with their regrets, for having ever abandoned the countries and governments to which they had previously belonged.

If, they were only the disloyal and turbulent, who were thus leaving the British empire, and bending their course to those countries ; their departure, and their forbearing to settle in these Colonies, might be considered as most favourable events. There are, however, great numbers of loyal and valuable subjects among them, who from the pressure of taxes, from not having been able to procure sufficient employment to afford a maintenance for themselves and their families,or from a variety of other good and justifiable causes, are abandoning with sorrow and reluctance, the countries of their birth, and the institutions they had long been accustomed to love and revere.

If these were sufficiently apprised, of the numerous natural advantages, of the mild and equitable nature of the government, of the freedom, the exemption from taxes, and the many other blessings, which here are enjoyed ; and if such facilities, and public assistance to their settlement on the unimproved lands of the country, were afforded and held forth to their notice, as might very readily be granted, great numbers of them would undoubtedly be found to take up their residence here.

It certainly is an object of primary importance, not

only for the purpose of increasing the physical force of the Colony to defend it in the hour of danger, but for a variety of others, immmediately connected with the advancement of its general welfare, to encourage and procure a more extensive emigration hither, of the most active and laborious description of persons.

It is not merely by the application of industry and skill in the cultivation of lands already under improvement, that we must seek to procure a portion of bread, and of the other chief means of subsistence, fully adequate to our consumption. In several of our counties, it is requisite for the purpose, that, the forests should be more extensively cleared, and that an addition should be made to the number of those who are occupied in husbandry.

In some places, the price of labour being high, owing in some degree to the scarcity of labourers, and their being chiefly taken up in other pursuits, it is desirable, that an increase in the number of these, should also take place. This, would tend directly to the advantage of the farmer, as the rate of wages would be thereby reduced. The very extravagant price of labour, which until lately prevailed throughout the Province, and which still exists in some parts of it, may, indeed, be considered as one of the chief obstructions to the advancement of our Agriculture.

Before entering upon a statement and explanation of the means, which it is conceived should be employed, for increasing emigration hither, it may not be amiss, to inquire into the causes, which have heretofore operated to discourage and restrict it, and to prevent a more extensive settlement and improvement of the lands of the Province.

To those, who have long been resident in the Colony, or have been able to inform themselves of its affairs, and the measures pursued, during some former administrations of its government, it must be obvious, that, the principal cause, has been,—the fatal practice which prevailed during those periods, of granting or allotting, very extensive tracts of land to a few individuals. Some of these, have never even been within the Colony, while others who were present, when they obtained them, soon after departed, and have never returned. Of all, indeed, who are either absent, or here at this time, very few, comparatively, have done any thing towards settling or improving the large and valuable tracts they received. Some of these tracts, were granted through the direct authority and command of the government of the parent state, but by far the greater number of them, were made over in one form or other by the presiding authority here.

If that course of investigation were here to be adopted and pursued, which rigid but unsparing truth would sufficiently warrant, much might be said, respecting the conduct of a former Administration among us, in relation to this subject, which would afford ample foundation for the severest animadversion and censure. Motives might be set forth, and explained, as notoriously influencing and determining, that power who too long and too fatally presided over our affairs, in a number of instances of the public evil here spoken of, which were as unjust and disgraceful, as the evil itself has been extensive and lasting. As such an exposition, however, by way of a public warning or check against an extension of the mischief, is rendered unnecessary, its measure having already been wrought to the full; and as sorrow and regret may have succeeded transgression, charity, may be allowed to draw the veil over much of what justice would seek to disclose.

The mischief, has indeed been done; and to a fatal

and lamentable extent. It has had the most prejudicial operation and influence, with respect to the general welfare, and the hopes and prospects of the Colony; but in no particular, has it been so fatal, as in retarding its settlement. This, may indeed, be said to include every other injurious effect.

The two succeeding Administrations, were greatly employed in endeavouring to remove in some measure this obstruction to our prosperity, and to remedy or obviate the evils which were thus introduced. The late one, in particular, which it was in every respect our happiness to possess, was assiduously and zealously engaged in such upright and laudable endeavours.

Well, indeed, may it be said, that the zeal, the integrity, and the wisdom, displayed by the truly elevated and magnanimous character, who then presided among us, in every thing relating to our safety and happiness, will ever be held in the most grateful and affectionate remembrance, by all who witnessed the exercise of those virtues, and who sincerely desire the prosperity of the Colony. Firm, and ardent in his purposes and endeavours for the public good, far exalted above every selfish or unjust consideration or motive, without any of those favorites, or creatures, who are too frequently found about persons in exalted situations, and who influence or bias them in their conduct, his popularity, and the esteem and respect which were so universally cherished towards him, were not courted by the exercise of that address, and of those arts, which too often are practised with a view to the establishment of those favorable sentiments; but were raised and secured on that foundation, whereon alone they can safely and permanently repose,—upon the faithful and conscientious discharge of every public duty. Ever, as ready to hear, and as attentive to the complaints or requests of the most indigent and obscure individual, as of the most wealthy or

exalted, a great portion of his time was every day diligently employed,—in the correction of abuses—in supporting and establishing the rights of the weak, against the overbearing attempts of the haughty and powerful, and in promoting every object which could conduce to the welfare of all over whom he presided. During his administration, and through his authoritative interference, and rigid inspection, a vigilance, and expedition were employed in all our public offices, in the transaction of business, altogether unusual, and which with regard to one of them in particular, it is so highly desirable should at present prevail.

Such, was the Ruler, we were once so greatly favored as to possess, and at whose departure, regrets were experienced, which could only be equalled, by the esteem in which he ever was held while among us. He was in truth, one of those few characters, who placed in public situations, seem formed and given for the good and the happiness of mankind; and for redeeming in some measure the charge, which is too often with justice advanced, of the corruptions, the abuses, and oppressions, which attend on the exercise of high and extensive command. This digression, if a digression it must be called, will readily be pardoned by those, who know how to appreciate worth, and who had opportunities of observing the conduct of that upright and estimable character.

In making further observations, relative to the extensive grants and allottments of land which have been spoken of, it may be mentioned, that, it has been offered by way of extenuation or excuse for making them—that they were bestowed as rewards for public services performed, or in satisfaction of just and equitable claims. Such, might have been the case with respect to a few of them, but by far the greater number, it is well known, were in the nature of gratuities to favorites, or made to

answer political, or even pecuniary purposes. Of those which really were made in satisfaction of such claims, while some might even fall short of requiting them, none were of individual advantage, commensurate with the public evil they imposed.

In many instances where such claims were well founded, it would even have been better for the Province, to have allowed moderate salaries, or pensions, than to have had those powerful and lasting impediments opposed to the increase of its population, and to its agricultural improvement.

It has moreover been particularly unfortunate and injurious, that it is in that quarter of the Province, to which emigration has chiefly been directed, and in which the greatest proportions of fertile and valuable land is to be found, that the greatest quantity of it is held in the manner described. The persons who obtained those extensive grants and allottments, have been sufficiently aware of those circumstances; and therefore, while they were particularly assiduous, as it was natural enough for them to be, to secure as many advantages as possible to themselves, the public mischief has thereby been rendered the greater.

In the districts and townships in that quarter, although from the tops of the loftiest hills, the eye in ranging over immense tracts of country, will scarcely be able to discern the partial and thinly scattered settlements, yet by far the greater portion of the land which remains in its original and uncultivated state, has long been granted to persons, who to all appearance, never intend to employ any exertions to have it improved.

It is even well known, that from some but recently

formed settlements in that part of the Province, numbers of families have been constantly removing, from an inability to procure portions of land in at all convenient situations, whereon they might settle. It is not indeed too much to assert, that within twenty years past, some hundreds of individuals, have almost wholly from this cause, abandoned the Province for one of the colonies adjacent. Many of these, were the children of persons who have long been resident in the country, and whose landed possessions were so limited, that they could not allow them such portions thereof, as would afford them farms sufficiently extensive. These persons, above all others, from a variety of considerations, should if possible have been kept in the colony.

Numbers of the most valuable description of persons who have hitherto emigrated to the country, who took up their residence on some of the extensive tracts of land which are held in the manner described, through a fear of being hereafter deprived of the fruits of their labours, and an anxiety arising from the insecurity of their possessions, or from the threats of those powerful proprietors, have been led to abandon the improvements they had been many years occupied in making. Many others, are even at this day, harrassed with prosecutions at law, to force them out of possessions acquired and held under similar circumstances.

The evils here stated, have long been among the principal impediments to the increase of our population, and our agricultural prosperity; and unless some prompt and vigorous measures are taken to remove them, it would be altogether useless and vain, to hold out any inducement to a more rapid or extensive emigration to the colony.

If it is indeed desirable, that this should be encour-

aged ; or even that we should retain in the country, the great numbers of young persons who are daily arriving at manhood, and are desirous of acquiring landed possessions for themselves, and remaining among their connexions and friends, it certainly should be viewed as an object of serious magnitude, to remove those obstructions as far as it can possibly be done.

This, was the policy with regard to the subject, which appeared to guide and to influence the conduct of the two last administrations of the government here ; but, although, under them, the evil was in some measure curtailed and removed, yet much still remains to be done, for reducing yet more, those effects of it, which are daily becoming more deeply injurious.

In the course of the last administration in particular, the Crown was reinvested by escheat, or otherwise resumed the possession, of many tracts of land which had been granted or allotted under the circumstances already set forth. Several portions of these, were subsequently bestowed upon individuals, who in all probability were thereby prevented from leaving the Province; and who have since made extensive and valuable improvements upon them. If those tracts had remained under the titles of the former proprietors, there is little doubt, but the most of them would have continued to this day in a wild and uncultivated state.

It is known, that since the reinvestment in government by way of escheat, of some tracts of land in the eastern part of the Province, which had remained in their primitive condition ; and since others of great extent in that quarter, which had long been considered as belonging to private individuals, in consequence of their having been laid off to them, have been granted to persons

who were desirous of settling and improving upon them, that, a much fewer number of persons, comparatively, have gone out of the Colony from thence, than had previously gone, within an equal period of time. The political, and other advantages, which here are enjoyed, are so very much greater, than those which are to be found in the adjacent Island, to which the greater number of the persons who so have removed have gone to reside, that, not the slightest doubt can be reasonably entertained, but, that nearly the whole of them would hare remained in the Province, if they could have obtained from government, portions of land in at all convenient situations.

In order to remove as effectually as possible the evil of which we have been speaking, it must be sufficiently obvious, that no better mode can be adopted, than immediately to make the escheat of lands, which have been granted under the circumstances lately described, and which still remain in their original condition, more extensive and general. It would indeed be well, if the measure was adopted and without any exception pursued—of reinvesting the Crown in that way, of all tracts of land, which after having been granted a specified number of years, should still be found in their original unimproved state.

If this measure was established, and rigidly enforced, it would doubtless have the effect, of leading many individuals to whom extensive tracts have been granted, to use immediate exertions for clearing and improving them. At present, they are perfectly indifferent and careless about doing so; knowing, that without any exertions on their part, they are daily increasing in value; and not wishing, or perhaps finding it inconvenient, to expend any money or attention upon them.

It certainly is highly impolitic, to say nothing with respect to injustice, to permit these individuals to con-

tinue to hold lands under such circumstances, while there are such numbers of persons constantly coming into the colony, and so many others already among us, who would gladly settle upon them, and immediately commence their improvement.

The proceedings in order to obtain escheats, when sought for by individuals, have hitherto been so dilatory, and in general so troublesome, and expensive, that many have by reason thereof been deterred from making applications to procure them. It would not therefore be politic, to abstain from causing them to take place, until the lands which were liable to suffer them, should be applied for by the persons desirous of settling thereon; but, would be highly beneficial, and proper, for reinvestments by that course of proceeding, to be immediately ordered and effected on the part and at the expense of the government; so that they might be free for the settlement of persons upon them, so soon as applications for that purpose were made.

The difficulties and inconveniences, which emigrants as well as others have heretofore had to contend with, in procuring ungranted and uncultivated land, for the purpose of settling thereon, together with the expenses of obtaining grants of the same, have also operated to retard the Agricultural improvement of the colony.

With respect to the emigrant, even if he makes his application for land immediately on his arrival in the country, several months in general elapse, and not unfrequently even more than a year, before he either obtains the tract for which he applied, or is even so fully assured of obtaining it, that he can venture to settle thereon. In the mean time, if he is a person in indigent circumstances, which is generally the case, he and his family continue burthens upon some relatives or friends

who, probably, can ill afford to grant them the subsistence and support they require.

In making his application, he is in general, either really under the necessity, or conceives that he is, of resorting to the capital to prefer his petition; and after having done so, he seldom can afford the expense of remaining there, enduring the delays of office, until a warrant of survey is issued in his favour; but, is obliged to return, and remain still in the same dependent and anxious situation. After some time, and even in some instances, not until after the fatigue and expense of another journey to the capital, he obtains his warrant of survey, and an order thereon to some deputy surveyor; to suit whose convenience, very probably, after waiting some further time, the portion of land which had been allowed, is laid off to him. This being accomplished, he may, it is true, with tolerable safety, erect his cabin thereon, and commence the cultivation of the soil; but still is left to entertain some anxiety relative to the completion of his title. After having procured a return of the survey made in his favour, he is obliged again to make application for the purpose of obtaining the grant; and in most instances, it is not until after the lapse of a very considerable period of time, (through the delays in some of our public offices which have long with good reason been complained of,) and too frequently, not until he has made another journey or more to the capital, together with an expense, as fees of offices, which he can but ill afford to defray, that he becomes confirmed and secured in his possession, by receiving the grant.

There are many, indeed, who enter upon land under surveys which have been made in their favour, and who build and make improvements thereon, but, remain long without any better title; merely from their inability to pay the fees which are required for procuring its completion. These persons, while holding under such cir-

cumstances, are constantly in danger, if not of being actually turned out of their possessions, yet at least of being harrassed with attempts to that effect, by persons who through misrepresentation or otherwise may obtain grants of the tracts so possessed. This, is not a mere imaginary danger. Instances of such attempts are known to have occurred.

It is true, that according to a regular and just administration of law on the subject, they could not be deprived of such possessions by virtue of grants so obtained; but, of this they are not in general aware, and therefore, entertain an anxiety lest it should actually take place. This evil, however light, or inconsiderable in may appear, it would be well, as far as possible, to abviate or remove. It should seem indeed, to be highly desirable and important, that the government should interfere in the very first instance, for the assistance of persons under those circumstances, and should quiet and secure them in their possessions, by rendering their titles compleat.

Such have been the embarrassments, and difficulties, which persons emigrating to the Colony, as well as others have had to contend with, in settling upon our wild and uncultivated land, and it cannot be doubted, but, that they have had some effect in preventing its more extensive improvement.

However prominently, and pointedly they have here been exhibited, still, they are not equal to those, which persons of the like descriptions, are obliged to encounter in obtaining land in some of the other Colonies, and are far from being of such magnitude as will be met with, in procuring it in those parts of the United States, to which so many persons, even from the British Empire, have recently been resorting. Still, however,

they must be considered of serious consequence ; and, accordingly, measures ought immediately to be taken to remove or reduce them.

It now remains to consider of this part of the subject, and to point out and illustrate some plan, through the adoption and prosecution of which, a more extensive settlement of the uncultivated land of the country may be facilitated and encouraged.

There is none which appears better calculated for effecting that desirable purpose, than the formation and establishment, under some such regulations as will presently be specified, of a Board, or Society, in each county and district, to be composed of a certain number of the most judicious and intelligent persons, chosen out of the Agricultural Society therein established. Of this, it might, indeed, very properly and consistently be made a branch or committee.

The first power with which such Boards might with propriety be invested, and which they could in the very first instance pursue with the greatest advantage, would be,—to employ persons, properly qualified, to make regular surveys of all the ungranted land fit for cultivation within their several districts,—and to lay off the same in lots of moderate extent. Accurate plans, and returns of these, should be furnished to such Boards, and also be left in the office of the Surveyor General of lands, and in that of the Secretary of the Province. Such Boards, should meet at stated periods during the year, and also on any urgent or extraordinary occasion ;—such, as the arrival within their districts of any number of emigrants. It would also be well to require, that, unless, under very special circumstances, all applications for land should be made to them, and their recommendation obtained, before issuing grants of the same,

or giving any authority or permission to settle thereon. At such meetings, they might determine respecting all such applications, and where they deemed them proper, and well founded, should have it in their power, to assign to the persons making them, the lots so laid off; and to give to them tickets, or orders, authorizing them immediately to enter thereon, and commence their improvement.

It would fourther be requisite,—that lists should at least annually be transmitted to the two public offices beforementioned, and also to a general superintending Board, which should be established in the Capital—of the names of all persons to whom lands had been so allotted, stating,—the number of persons in each family which had obtained any such ticket,—the quantity of acres contained in the lot for which it was given, and the apparent circumstances of the person to whom it was assigned,—and whether he was actually resident, or making improvements thereon. Upon such returns, warrants of survey in the manner at present observed, might issue to the Surveyor General of land, who could immediately make reports thereon, founded upon the plans and returns beforementioned; and grants might pass in favour of such persons for the lands so allotted them, immediately after their having been resident thereon a specified period of time.

These Boards would also be enabled to obtain information, relative to the tracts of land within their several districts which were heretofore granted or laid off, and which still remain in an unimproved state; and could make returns and reports respecting the same, through the office of the Provincial Secretary, to the executive branch of the government; stating—whether the individuals to whom they were granted, or for whom they were surveyed, were, or were not resident in the Colony—or whether they were about settling upon

them—or were likely to do so. This would tend to expedite and procure the escheat of many of those tracts of land, which it has already been stated, are held by absent proprietors, and others, who to all appearance, have no intention of ever employing any exertions to have them improved.

It would, also, be well, that, in cases where the persons to whom they had delivered any such tickets as have been mentioned, did not within one year, or any other limited time, settle or make improvements upon the lots for which they were given, they should be authorized to assign such lots to other individuals, who should be desirous of settling thereon.

It would further be indispensibly requisite, that sums of money should be granted from the revenues of the country, and placed at the disposal of such Boards: out of which, they might defray the expences of making such surveys, and other charges, which would be necessarily attendant upon the execution of many of the powers and duties which they would be called upon to exercise and perform. They might, also, with great propriety, and advantage, be authorized to pay out of such sums, the fees for the obtaining of grants, in cases where the persons to whom they were made, were in such indigent circumstances, that they could not immediately advance them. For securing repayment, they could take from such persons, notes, or other securities, payable at stated periods, to their treasurers or secretaries; whose duty it should be—to collect the sums of money due thereupon, and pay the same, into the treasury of the Province, or in any other manner which might be prescribed.

Such, are merely the outlines of what might be improved into a regular, and well connected system; and through which might be effected, the most beneficial re-

sults. It must, indeed, it is conceived, be sufficiently obvious to most persons, that, such a measure, would have the most salutary operation and effects, with regard to the difficulties and inconveniences which have been lately described, and in facilitating, and extending the Agricultural improvement of the country.

The members composing the Boards, would be able to inform themselves in almost every instance, of the situations in life, and the circumstances of the persons making applications for land, and would be thereby enabled, to determine respecting them, with justice and propriety: and, by being authorized to assign it, only to persons who were wishing immediately to settle thereon, a check and preventive would be afforded to any further portion of our unimproved land being obtained by persons having other intentions.

From the establishment of such Boards, the emigrants and others desirous of obtaining land whereon to settle, would be saved the expense, the trouble, and anxiety, which it has already been stated they have hitherto experienced; and, from the facility with which it could then be procured for that purpose, (which would soon become fully and generally known,) many persons would be induced to apply for it, and remain in the Colony, who, if the difficulties existed with respect to obtaining it, which at present prevail, would most probably take their departure.

If, it would be prudent, or advisable, to grant in any manner whatever, such powers as it has here been recommended to confer, it doubtless would be more proper and advantageous, to vest them in such a Board as has been mentioned, than in any one individual. It is in general found, that more impartiality and justice

are exercised, where power is diffused among a number of persons, than where it rests wholly with one: although the measures of the former, are not marked with such promptness and dispatch, as characterize those of the latter.

If the whole of such powers were vested in one individual, that one, would most probably in every instance, be the person possessing the first weight and influence within the limits for which he was appointed, and would be thereby enabled, fully, and securely, to exercise those partialities, those prejudices, and that injustice, which some characters of that description among us, have so frequently displayed within the sphere of their influence, and through the exercise of which, the sway they possess, is, in a general point of view, productive of more evil than good.

By vesting them in a number of persons, composing such Boards as have been described, there would, certainly, be the strongest probability of their being fairly and equitably exercised, and that the desirable purposes intended to be effected by conferring them, would be extensively accomplished, as the partialities, the prejudices, or the interested views of any one of such persons, would be checked and controlled by the others.

Having said so much respecting our Agriculture, and the subjects with which it is most intimately connected, it may not be amiss, to point out and explain some of the good consequences which would follow from its extension and improvement.

The first, and most important effect which would be thereby produced, would be—a general abundance of the chief means of subsistence, and consequently a re-

duction in their prices. This, indeed, will be found on reflection to include all other advantages. Most of those, which we might expect to reap from such improvement, would certainly depend on such reduction, and would almost immediately follow it as matters of course.

The prices of labour, in nearly every department and calling, would in consequence fall. This effect, would be most highly beneficial to the Agricultural interest in particular; as one of the many causes which have hitherto operated to obstruct and retard its advancement, has been—the high rate of labour which so long prevailed throughout the Province.

To our fishermen, also, whose circumstances so greatly require improvement, such reduction in the price of labour, would upon the whole be of very material advantage. Those, who were at all extensively engaged in the pursuit of that occupation, and had servants employed to assist them, would receive an immediate benefit from it; and even such servants, if they were persons having families, would be more than compensated for such reduction, by the diminution in the prices of the means of subsistence; and in the consequent decrease of those of many articles of the most indispensible use. Such reduction, as to the main articles of food, would further benefit the fisherman, by enabling him to confine his attention and labours exclusively to his occupation; and to draw from the Agricultural class of the community, such of these articles as he would chiefly require.

The general abundance, and the reduction in the prices of the means of subsistence, proceeding from the improvement of our Agriculture, would also have the effect of reducing the prices of most of the European, and other imported articles. The vender of these, has, of course, in seeking his livelihood, been equally affected

with all other descriptions of persons by the high prices of the of the principal articles of food; and has even more extensively than most others, experienced the injurious effects of the high rate of labour, consequent thereon. From these causes, and from the risks and inconveniences he incurs, in selling his goods upon a long and extensive credit, (which he is in general under the necessity of doing) and from the losses he so frequently sustains, through some of his debtors absconding, and others becoming insolvent and being unable to make him payment, he is obliged to require, what under other circumstances, would properly be termed an exorbitant profit, upon most of the articles he vends. Now, if the prices of the chief means of subsistence were reduced, all the other causes would be obviated, or diminished, and a reduction in the prices of those articles would follow of course. The competition, which constantly exists among those employed in vending them, would not suffer their prices to continue the same; but would soon bring them down, in proportion with such reduction as to the articles of food.

These positions, are indeed so plain, and it may almost be said, so self-evident, that some may be ready to conclude, that it was altogether unnecessary to have stated them here; but it is conceived, that in essaying to trace out the leading beneficial results, which will ensue from our agricultural improvement, those which have just been described could not have been omitted with any kind of propriety. It is not merely speculative truths, or those of inferior interest, that stand in need of being urged and supported; but, many even of the most obvious and important description, require in order to the establishment or preservation of their influence, to be frequently stated and enforced.

It will further appear, upon proper consideration, that, besides the reduction in the price of labour, other

very important benefits will result to our commerce, from the improvement of our agricultural interest. An increased supply, will be thereby afforded, of articles of home produce, not only for sale and barter in the home market, but also for exportation. In consequence of such improvement, many articles would doubtless in the course of a few years, be afforded for the last mentioned purpose, about which our commerce has scarcely ever yet been employed; and which certainly have not yet been exported from the country.

Such improvement, will also place it in the power of customers, to make to the merchant more sure and regular payments. The disappointments and irregularities with regard to these, which he has hitherto so extensively experienced, have been deeply injurious, and often have occasioned or hastened his ruin.

It deserves also to be remarked—that, if we were independent of any other country for bread, a greater quantity of coin would be retained in the Colony, and be kept in circulation. The great scarcity of this, has for some of the last years been complained of, and not without reason, by all descriptions of persons, but more particularly by those engaged in mercantile pursuits.—These, it has greatly operated to cramp and embarrass. The principal, indeed almost the sole cause of this scarcity, for a considerable time, it is notorious, was the very large sums we were continually sending to the United States, for the purchase of flour and grain. It may even very reasonably be presumed, that in some years, the sums of money which were sent thither to procure those articles alone, were not very far short of the annual revenues of the Province. The sums which have hitherto been constantly going out of the country, for the purchase of barley and hops, for the use of the few breweries we possess, have even been very considerable. With respect to these articles, it may very justly be said, that it

is a matter of disgrace and reproach to us, that we have been dependent upon any foreign quarter for their supply. There probably is scarcely a country to be found, in which the latter article in particular, can be raised with less difficulty, and in greater abundance than here.

Through the extension and improvement of our Agriculture, our husbandmen and all the inferior orders of persons, would, also, after a short time, be rendered less under the power and controul of wealthy and arbitrary individuals. Some of these, it is well known, are to be found in certain parts of the Province, who exercise within the extensive jurisdictions they have prescribed and secured for themselves, the most potent, and indeed it may almost be said, unlimited sway. However extensive, the powers and authority with which they are legally invested, yet it is obvious, that it is not upon these, that the influence they possess, and the dominion they exercise are founded. Their power arises, from most of the persons within their jurisdictions being deeply indebted to them. The influence they derive from this source, is exhibited in the most marked and unquestionable manner, on all public occasions; their views and desires in relation to which they have only to make known, in order to secure their accomplishment. Many of the oppressions which are committed in the course of the exercise of this influence can scarcely be accurately described, but they are well understood by those in whom they are practised; and are felt the more keenly, from their being of those descriptions, which preclude all hope of redress. Jealous of any encroachment on their power, and tenacious of their influence, those haughty individuals are constantly on the watch, to cramp and to stifle all exertion and enterprise, which would militate in the least with their own selfish, and prejudiced views.

In countries of but recent settlement, and whose prosperity depends upon agricultural improvement, great

and signal inequalities as to riches and influence, are in general dangerous and hurtful. The nearer an equality with respect to these, in which men can be kept, consistently with the preservation of all just and lawful authority, the more likely will they be, to raise the country they inhabit to a state of prosperity and abundance.

It is only through diligent and undivided attention to their agricultural occupations, that those of our husbandmen, whose lands are held under mortgage by those wealthy and powerful individuals, or whose property of every description is now lying at their mercy, can expect to become relieved from their pecuniary embarrassments, and to remove those obstructions to the just exercise of their rights, which too many of them have weakly or wantonly created.

It is chiefly to this valuable class of persons, that the warnings and exhortations contained in these pages are addressed; and for their benefit are they principally intended. Upon them, the eyes of all other orders at present are turned, with anxious hopes and desires. They, alone, possess the power of giving vigour to all the sources of wealth we possess, and of exalting us to a state of true and solid prosperity; and through their diligent and persevering exertions, those desirable objects can assuredly be attained. Not only to them, but to all others, the time past should more than suffice, to have indulged in indolence, dissipation, or despondency. It is now time to set about proving, what unremitted industry, economy, and prudence can be made to effect.

We are now in a state of peace, and tranquility, which it is to be hoped by all who wish well to the cause of humanity, will long continue to prevail.—By none is it more sincerely desired, than by the author of these observations. We all know, however, that changes and revolutions in the political world, very frequently on a sudden take place; and therefore, un-

less it can be made to appear, that the principles, and dispositions of human nature, have of late undergone a total alteration, we may be excused for entertaining apprehensions, that before the lapse of any great number of years, the political horizon will again be overcast, and we may be involved in the dangers, or perhaps the horrors of war. Most of us, indeed, are thoroughly convinced of the designs which are cherished towards us, by a neighbouring power. If, then, the freedom and blessings we at present enjoy, are worthy of care and regard, let all, duly reflecting upon them, employ in this the season of tranquility, their utmost exertions for advancing the colony to that state of strength and prosperity, through which its defence in the hour of danger may be rendered more powerful and sure; let them strive in their several stations to make a proper improvement of all the advantages now in their power; and in so doing, they will have the most ample grounds of satisfaction afforded them; and will be made from happy experience, to assent to this important and valuable truth—that even in worldly affairs, either sooner or later, [illegible] interest are almost invariably found to unite.

THE END.